



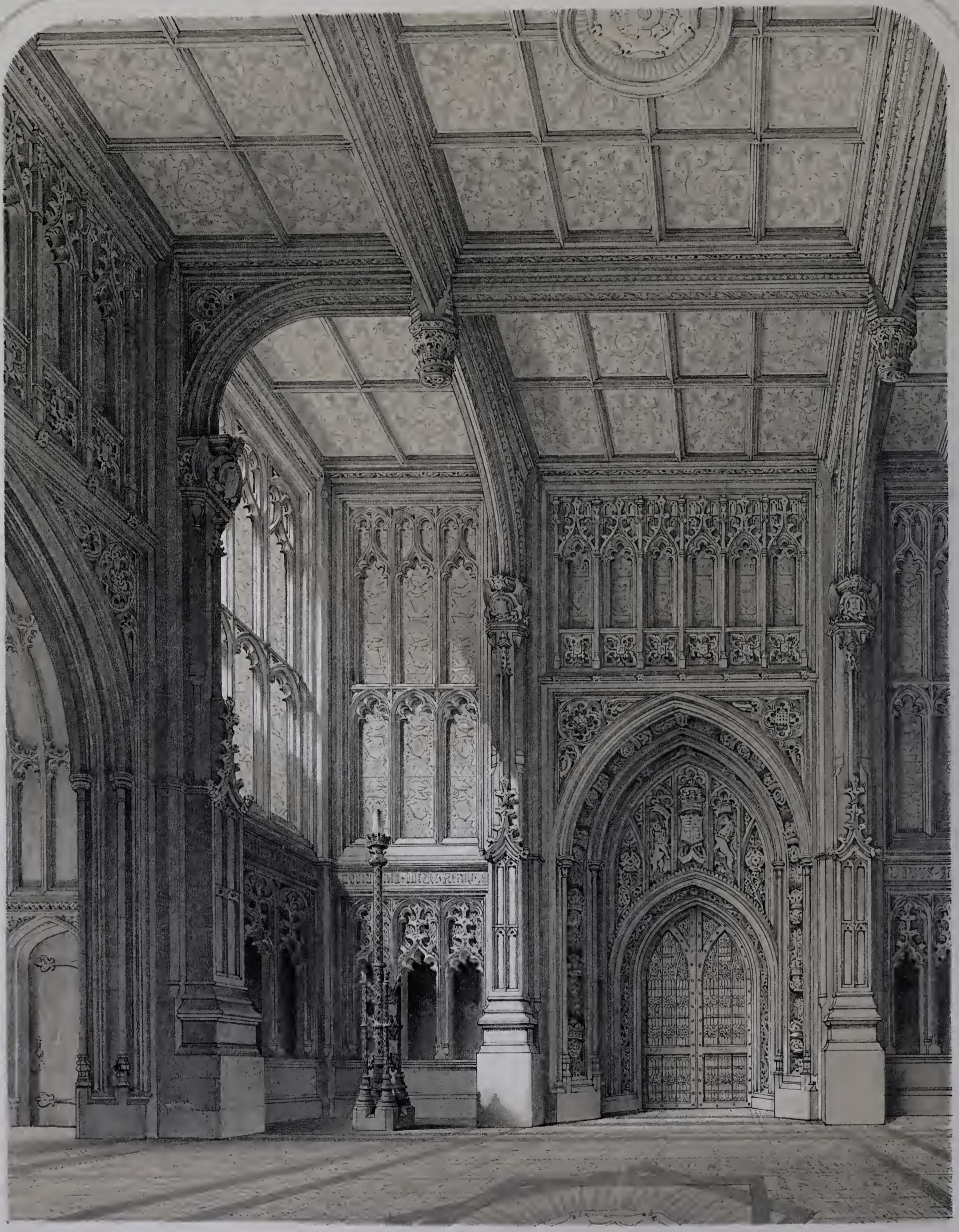
HISTORY
OF THE
PALACE
OF
WESTMINSTER.

E. H. Holmes Esq⁵

with Drawings to his Committee

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C. SOMERS CLARKE DELT.

CHARLES BARRY R. A. ARCHT.

E. T. DOLBY LITH.

THE PEERS' LOBBY
leading to the House of Lords.

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OF WASHINGTON

1870

THE VILLAGE OF WASHINGTON

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE VILLAGE OF WASHINGTON

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GENERAL INFORMATION

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

CHARLES BARRY, ESQ., R.A., ARCHITECT.

FROM DRAWINGS BY J. JOHNSON, F.S.A., AND G. SOMERS CLARKE, ARCHITECTS,

AND

JOHN THOMAS, SCULPTOR.

A HISTORY OF THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER,

BY HENRY T. RYDE.

F I R S T S E R I E S.

London:

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SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & CO.

Dedicated, by Permission
To the
Lord Great Chamberlain
of England,
Hereditary Governor of the
Palace of Westminster,
by his Lordship's
Most Obed'thumble Servants,
The Publishers.

The Palace of Westminster.

Charles Barry, Esq., R. A., Architect.

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FRONTISPICE.

THE PEEPS' LOBBY.

THIS is the principal Entrance to the House of Lords, and the decorations, both architectural and pictorial, are most magnificent. In form it is square, each side being divided into one wide central and two smaller compartments.

The wide central compartments, on either side, have lofty arches, or doorways, of similar proportions and arrangement. The doorways on the east and west sides correspond with each other in detail, having quatrefoils in the spandrils, with the rose and portcullis in their centres. Above each arch is a series of six panels, separated by small buttresses with pinnacles : within them are painted the arms of the six different Royal lines who have swayed the English sceptre—the Saxon, Norman, Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart, and Hanoverian—each surmounted by a Royal Crown. Below each arch, and forming, as it were, a base to it, is a small panel, quatrefoiled, and bearing in its centre a shield, on which the initials of S.N.P.T.S.H. are painted, to correspond with the armorial bearings above them. The north doorway opens into the long corridor leading to the House of Commons ; whilst the eastern and western open into corridors connected with the Libraries, and other rooms. The doors are of oak, the hinges and locks being of brass.

At each corner of the Lobby is a magnificent standard of brass for gas lights. It consists of a shaft about twelve feet high, rising from a plinth, of Parian cement, to represent black marble ; from each corner of which rises a small circular pillar, to support the shaft, crowned with a lion's head. Every part of the pillars and shaft is elaborately worked out in lozenges and hexagons, with quatrefoils. The shaft is surmounted by a wrought coronal for the gas jets. The standards are gilded, relieved by gilt bronze.

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

The East, West, and North Entrances, have recessed doorways, with arches of lower pitch, to correspond in general character with the South Door, but of much plainer design. Each recessed doorway is divided into three parts—a central and two narrow compartments. In the central one is the doorway; above it the wall is formed into three quatrefoil panels, having within them shields containing the arms of England, Scotland, and Ireland, royally crowned, and with blue labels, on which are Anglia, Scotia, and Hibernia alternately. The doors are of oak, richly paneled, and having plate-glass. Over the East and West Doors are clocks, the dials of which are beautifully enamelled in white, gold, and blue. On either hand, in the thickness of the wall, are small doorways, leading to the galleries, and into small rooms.

The South Door, opening into the House of Lords, corresponds, in its general form, with those on the other side of the Lobby, having six panels over it, embellished, like them, with the Royal armorial bearings; but in the details of the archway itself, the utmost magnificence is displayed. The arch is deeply moulded, whilst, at intervals, are Tudor roses, very boldly sculptured in alto relief, royally crowned. Recessed about four feet is another arch, but not of so lofty a pitch as the external one, and, within the mouldings of this, oak-leaves, gilded, are introduced. The space over the arch is divided into five compartments, the central one quatrefoiled, and bearing in its centre a shield of the Royal Arms of England, surmounted by a crown, and having the motto “ Dieu et mon Droit” on a blue label; whilst, in the panels on either side, likewise quatrefoiled, are the lion and unicorn, each bearing a small banner: roses and thistles fill up the other panels, whilst shamrocks form a cresting round the arch; and as all parts are coloured and gilded, the effect is magnificent.

The massive brass gates under the south door are splendid specimens of intricate workmanship by Hardman; in weight one ton and a half.

The Encaustic Tiled Pavement is the finest specimen of the present day, the richness of the colours are particularly striking; these were manufactured by the firm of Minton, in Staffordshire. The marble margins of the floor, with that of the centre, is the produce of Derbyshire. The texture of these marbles is equal, in all respects, to the finest jasper: surrounding the centre is a very fine enamel, inlaid with brass, by Hardman. The stained glass windows represent the arms of the early families of the Aristocracy of England.

PLATE I.

PLAN OF THE PRINCIPAL FLOOR.

THE length of the East or River Front is 887 feet 9 in., and the Clock Tower projecting 54 feet 3 in. from the North Front, makes the total length from the Victoria Tower to the Clock Tower 942 feet. The Wing Towers project 38 feet from the centre portion, which will be the width of the Terrace. The length of the South Front is 322 feet.

On all State occasions Her Majesty will alight at the Victoria Tower, and after leaving the Robing Room, will pass through the Royal Gallery, attended by Her suite, into the Victoria Hall, entering the House of Lords by the door on the east side of the Throne, and returning the same way on Her departure. The Peers' entrance to the House is in the West Front, known as Old Palace Yard, and central between the Victoria Tower and St. Stephen's Hall.

The Entrance for the Members of the House of Commons will be through archways in the front at the east of Westminster Hall, into the Star Chamber Court, passing up the staircase into the House Lobby.

The Public Entrance will be in the North Front of Westminster Hall, passing through St. Stephen's Porch and St. Stephen's Hall, into the Central Hall, from which corridors lead east, north, and south, to the various offices, to which the numbered list refers. Access to St. Stephen's Porch is also obtained by another entrance in the West Front, opposite Henry the Seventh's Chapel.

KEY TO PLAN
OF THE
PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

No. 1. Black Rod's Residenee.	No. 22 ^b . Clerks' Offiee.
2. Librarian's Residenee.	22 ^c . Assistant Serjeant-at-Arms.
3. Speaker's Residenee.	22 ^d . Stairease to Journal's Offiee.
4. Offiee of Lord Great Chamberlain.	23. Members' Stairease.
5. Master of the Rolls' Offiee.	24. Members' Private Entranee Gallery.
6. Earl Marshal's Offices.	24 ^a . Hat and Cloak Gallery.
7. Lord Chaneellor's Offices.	25. Vote Office.
8. Clerk of Parliament's Offiees.	25 ^a . Staircase to Strangers' Gallery.
9. Chairman of Committee's Offiees.	26. Commons' Tea Room.
10. Peers' Robing Room.	26 ^a . Commons' Terraee Stairease.
10 ^a . Vote Office.	27. Commons' Refreshment Rooms.
10 ^b . Peers' Staircase.	28. Speaker's Private Offiees.
11. Bishops' Apartments.	28 ^a . Votes and Proeeedings of House.
12. Peers' Refreshment Rooms.	28 ^b . Waiting Lobby.
13. Business Offiees.	28 ^c . Reporters' Stairease.
14. Journal Offiees.	29. Deputy Housekeeper's Residenee.
14 ^a . Staircase to Strangers' Gallery.	30. Offices of Clerk of the House of
14 ^b . Reporters' Stairease.	Commons.
14 ^c . Staircase for Members of House of	30 ^a . Serjeantand DeputySerjeant-at-Arms
Commons to Galleries.	Offiees.
15. Offiees of Clerk of the Crown.	30 ^b . Chaplain of House.
16. Business Offices of House of Peers.	30 ^c . Speaker's Seeretary.
16 ^a . Witnesses' Waiting Rooms.	31. Clerk of Parliament's Residenee.
17. Peers' Terrace Staircase.	32. Librarian's Residence.
18. Cabinet Ministers' Rooms.	33. Prison.
19. Clerk of the Fees' Offiees.	34. Serjeant-at-Arms' Residence.
20. Publie Stairease to Committee	35. Members' Washing Room.
Rooms.	36. Offiee for Sale of Printed Papers.
21. Engrossing Offiee.	37. Private Bill Office.
22. Chairman of Committees.	38. Chief Clerks' Offiee.
22 ^a . Speaker's Counsel.	39. Private Offiees.

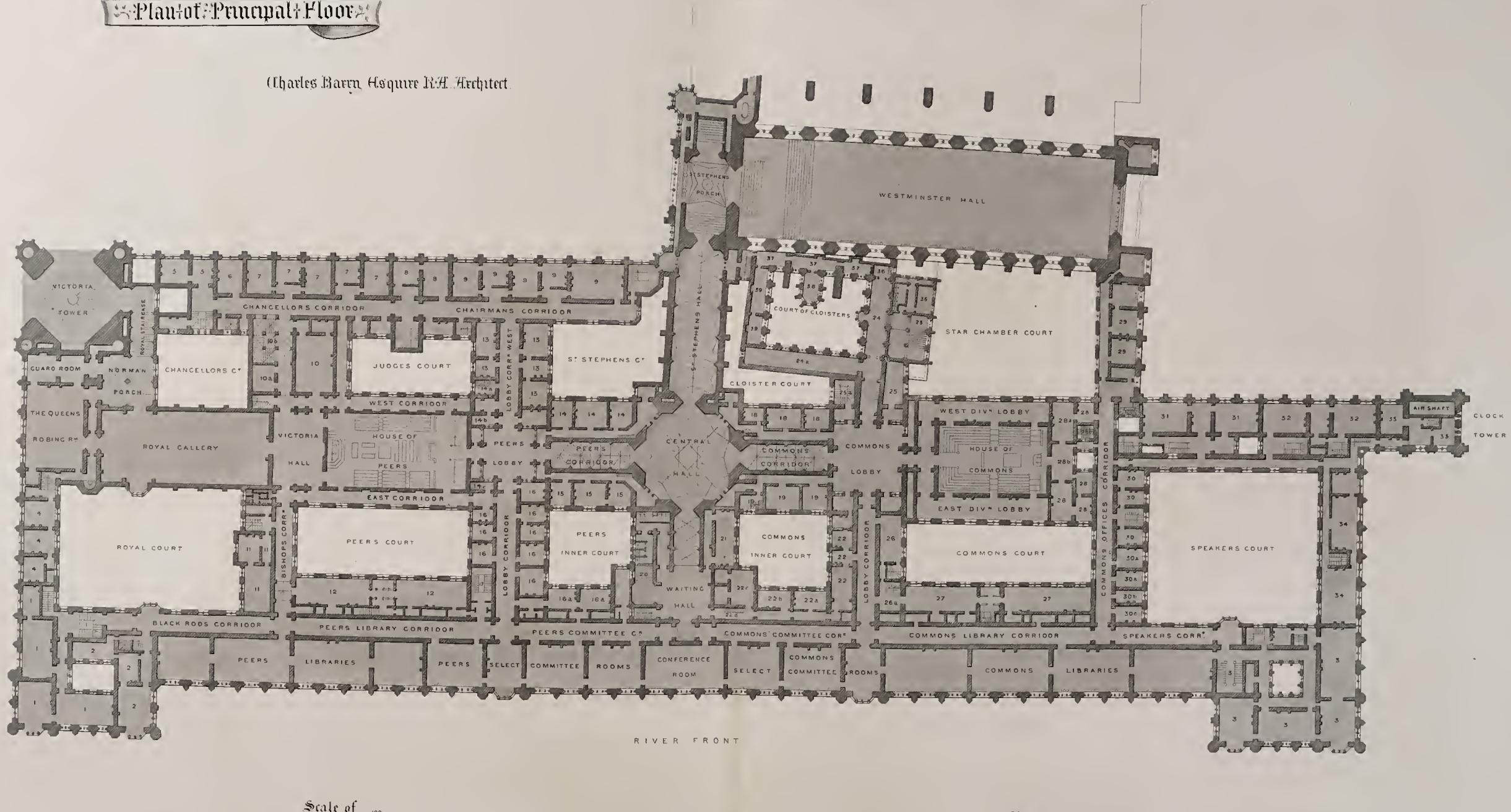
G.D.H.

THE PRACTICAL

WESTON'S HER.

Plan of Principal Floor

Charles Barron Esquire R.A. Architect



Scale of

300

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

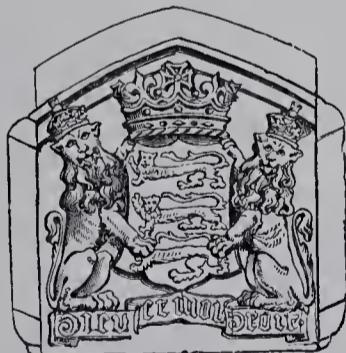
PLATE II.

THE ROYAL COURT.

THE carriages of Her Majesty and suite will pass into the Royal Court from the Victoria Tower by the archway at the South West Angle, and remain there until the time of departure.

The annexed view shews the exterior of the Royal Gallery and the Lord Great Chamberlain's Offices, as seen from the North East. The Turret at the south of the Royal Gallery contains a spiral staircase leading through each floor to the roof of the building.

The area of this Court is 120 feet by 80 feet.



ARMS UNDER WINDOWS OF ROYAL GALLERY



J. Johnson F.S.A. del'

The Royal Courts.
From the North East.

Printed by W. Warrington & Son, 27 Strand, London.

PLATE III.

ELEVATION OF LOWER PART OF THE VICTORIA TOWER,

AS FAR AS AT PRESENT COMPLETED.

THE plan of the Victoria Tower is square, with octagonal Turrets at each of the angles detached from the main building. The two great archways on the West and South sides towards Old Palace Yard are flanked by pedestals supporting colossal lions, in a sitting posture, holding heraldic banners. The enrichment in the large hollow of the suite of mouldings forming the jambs and heads of the archways is composed of a series of Tudor roses and crowns, in high relief, ranged at equal distances, having the intervening space on the face of the hollow filled with leaves and smaller roses springing from a main stem running up the centre, and finishing at the apex of the arch by a group of three angels crowned supporting the Royal Arms and Crown.



In the Quatrefoil Spandrels above the great archway are angels supporting shields, encircled by a Garter bearing the motto “*Honi soit qui mal y pense,*” and terminating at the buckle with a rose badge, having the letters “*V. R.*” on either side. The shield in the left Spandril has the Royal Arms; that in the right those of Edward the Confessor.

Crowns and shields, bearing the arms and badges of the three kingdoms, and ribands encircling the rose, shamrock, and thistle, are ranged alternately in the panels at either side, between the archways and the Turrets.

No definite arrangements have yet been made as to the Statues in the band of niches, with the exception of the raised centre niche, in which it is proposed to place a Statue of Her Majesty.

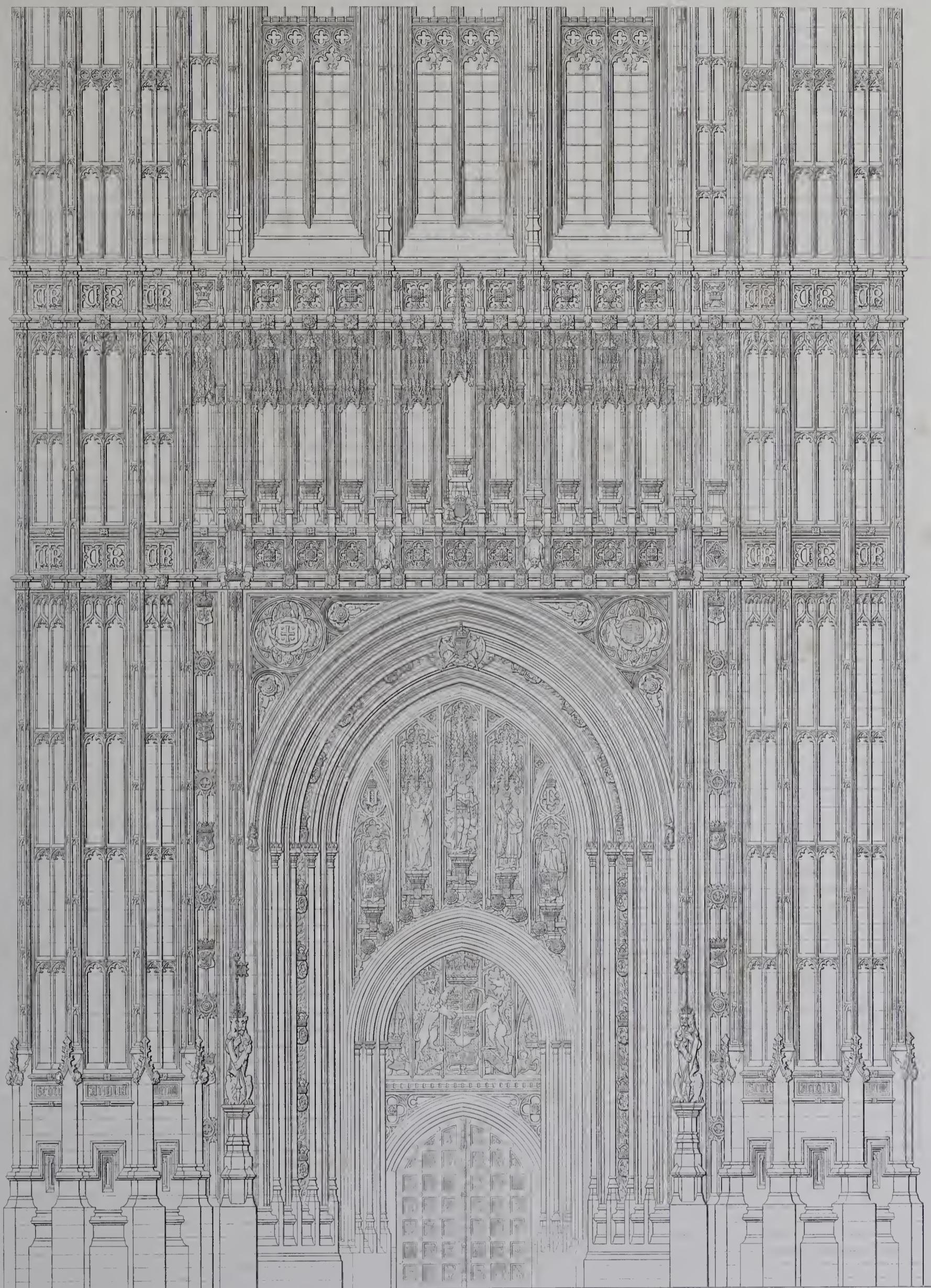
The devices in the centre of the Quatrefoil Bands, above and below the range of niches, consist of the rose, fleur-de-lis, and portcullis, alternately. The other ornaments and bosses in this highly ornamented elevation being subservient to the above, sufficiently explain themselves.

Within the great archway the Engraving exhibits an interior elevation of the east side of the Tower, composed of two arches or compartments, one above the other. The upper compartment comprises five niches; of which the three centre have projecting canopies, and contain Statues of the Patron Saints of the three kingdoms. Two angels, with shields bearing the Royal Arms, support the above on either side. These Statues rest on pedestals, having on their dies, shields, with the crosses appropriate to each Saint, and ribands, with the mottoes "Anglia," "Scotia," and "Hibernia," carved in high relief; the whole terminating at the base with an enrichment, composed of the roses of York and Lancaster, combined.



J.M. WILLIAMS, del. et scul.

The lower compartment opens to a recessed archway, surmounted by the Arms of Great Britain, with the badge and motto of the Prince of Wales on either side. The gates for this archway are proposed to be of oak, divided into two compartments of panels, filled with regal and other appropriate devices and insignia, the stiles and rails being studded with roses and bolts, having ornamental cut heads. These gates will be kept closed except upon extraordinary occasions, for the passage of state equipages into and from the Royal Court.



G. S. Clarke del

R.P. Cuff Sculpt

Victoria Copper

Elevation of lower part forming Royal Entrance to the Palace

Warrington & Son, 27 Strand, London.

PLATE IV.

VIEW OF SOUTH WING TOWERS.

THE South Wing Towers at the South-East Angle of the River Front, appropriated as the residences of the Usher of the Black Rod and the Librarian of the House of Lords, project considerably in advance of the main building, and form an important feature when viewed from the river.

This portion is composed of five bays, of which three are divided by hexagonal buttresses, crowned by pinnacles, and contain two light windows, with panels, on either side. The two outer bays being carried up a story higher, form Towers, having oriel windows corbelled out, running up to the level of the second floor. These Towers have octagonal turrets at the angles, terminating with lofty pinnacles, and high pitched iron roofs, with dormer lights on each flank: a rich metal cresting, or ridge ornament, surmounts the whole. The roof over the bays, between the Towers, is similarly ornamented.

Three horizontal bands of decorative carving (exclusive of the quatrefoil frieze under the cornice of the Towers) are carried immediately below the cills of the windows of each story above the Ground Floor.

The first band below the First or Principal Floor Windows contains, in Tudor characters, the royal initial letters and appropriate mottoes of the three kingdoms, corresponding to the several devices carved upon the coats of arms and shields in the band above, viz.—Victoria Regina feliciter regnans—Dieu et mon droit—Nemo me impune lacesset—Quis separabit,” etc. etc.



The second band running through the oriel windows contains the arms of Her present Majesty, flanked by panels containing shields, with the letters V. R., and surmounted by a helmet and lion crest.

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

The remainder of this band between the Towers contains crowns over shields, bearing the crosses and emblematic flowers, and in the panels on either side the sword and sceptre crossed by ribands with mottoes, and entwined by stems of foliage, flowers, etc., appropriate to the three kingdoms.

The third band above the oriels and windows of the Second Floor consists of a series of panels containing crowns and badges, with the mottoes and shields, bearing the devices assumed by the various Sovereigns since the Conquest.

On either side of the upper windows of the Towers are ranged shields, with the rose, shamrock, and thistle; and above, on small pedestals, in niches formed out of the parapet, are placed the supporters of the Royal Arms, holding shields, with the letters V. R. entwined by a cord and tassels. Similar niches in the parapet of the bays between the Towers contain angels, with shields bearing the royal monogram.

The pinnacle in the centre of the front of each of the Towers above the parapet is recessed, so as to form a niche, with projecting canopy, and contains a statue of Queen Victoria, as the Sovereign in whose reign the present Palace is being erected.

The south flank of the Towers is divided into two bays by a square projecting buttress running up the entire height, and crowned by a pinnacle; in which are ranged, in six niches, with canopies, statues of the Patron Saints of the United Kingdom, together with St. Peter and St. Paul, as the representatives of the two metropolitan churches.

With the exception of the Royal Arms supported by Angels, and placed over the windows in the second band, this description of the decorations of the front will apply to the flank of the South Wing Towers.



J. Johnson F.S.A. del'd

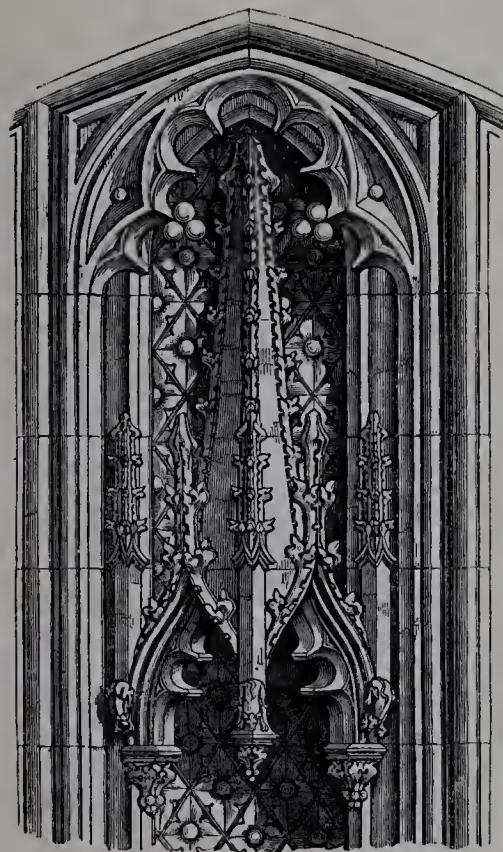
SOUTH WING TOWERS.

from the South East

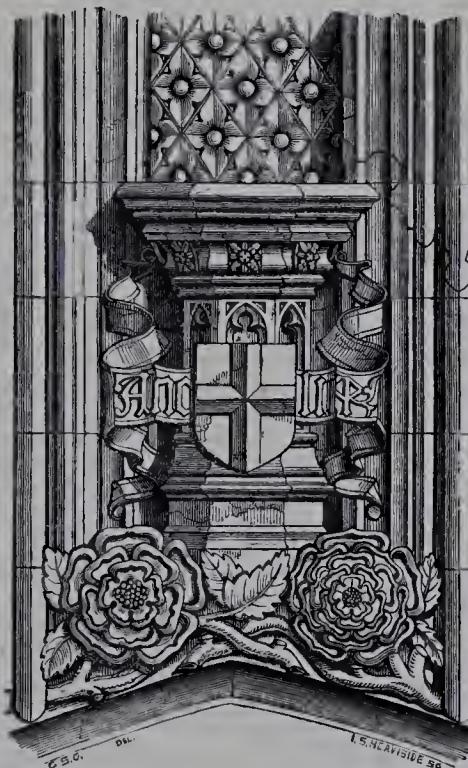
PLATE V.

INTERIOR VIEW OF EAST SIDE OF VICTORIA TOWER, AND ENTRANCE TO
THE ROYAL COURT.

THIS gateway, leading from the Victoria Tower to the Royal Court, has been already described in Plate III. Viewed from Abingdon-street, it presents a rich and imposing appearance. Bosses, of the most variegated designs, fill the hollow in the jambs and head of the archway. Massive octangular pedestals are placed on the four interior angles of the Tower, for the reception of candelabra.



DETAIL OF CANOPY TO NICHES

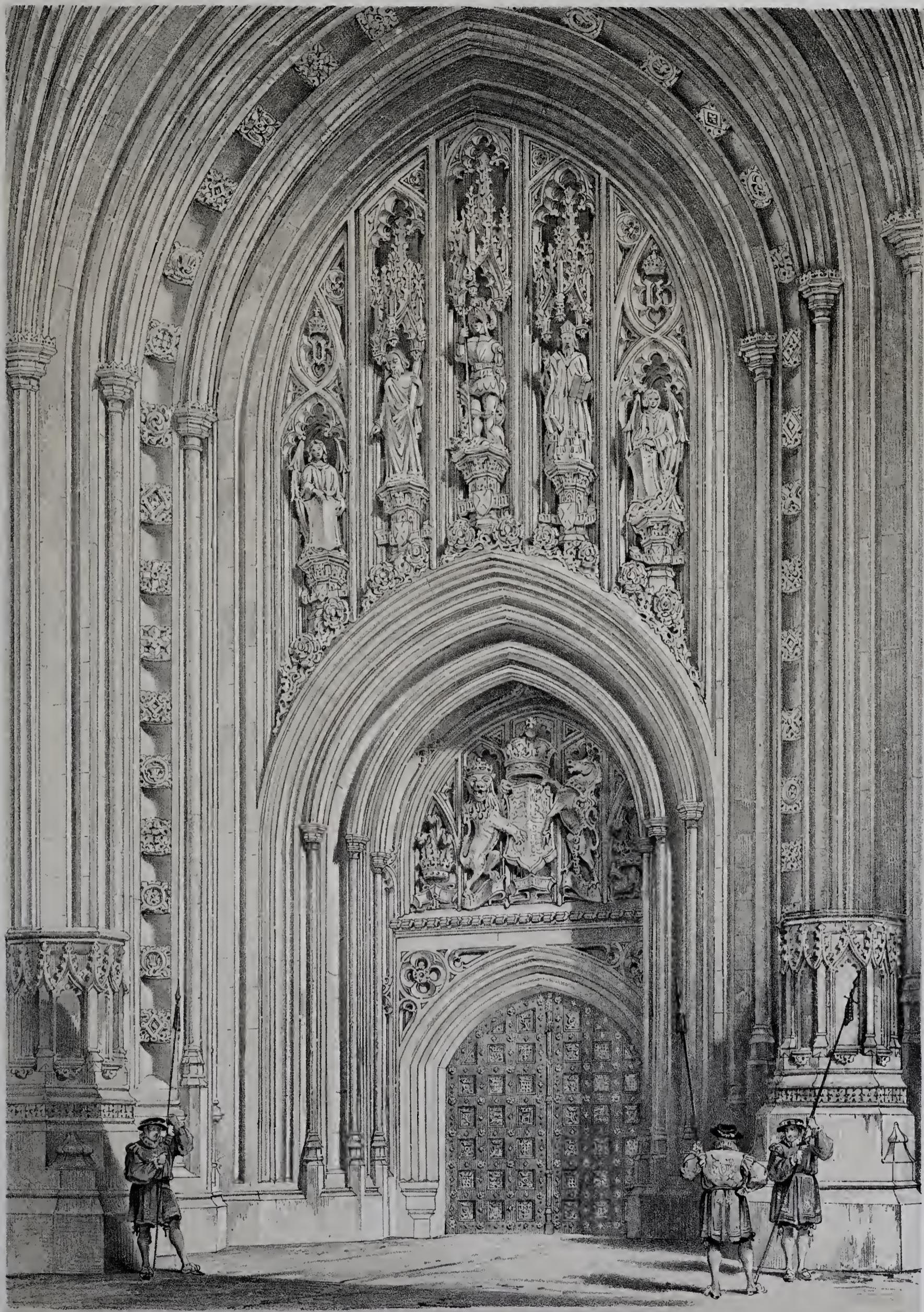


DETAIL OF PEDESTAL, etc. TO NICHES.

PLATE VI.

REPRESENTS the Patron Saints of the three kingdoms, St. George, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick, the principal figures in the niches over the archway. They are the production of Mr. J. Thomas, by whom the whole of the stone carving, both on the exterior and in the interior of the Palace, has been executed.

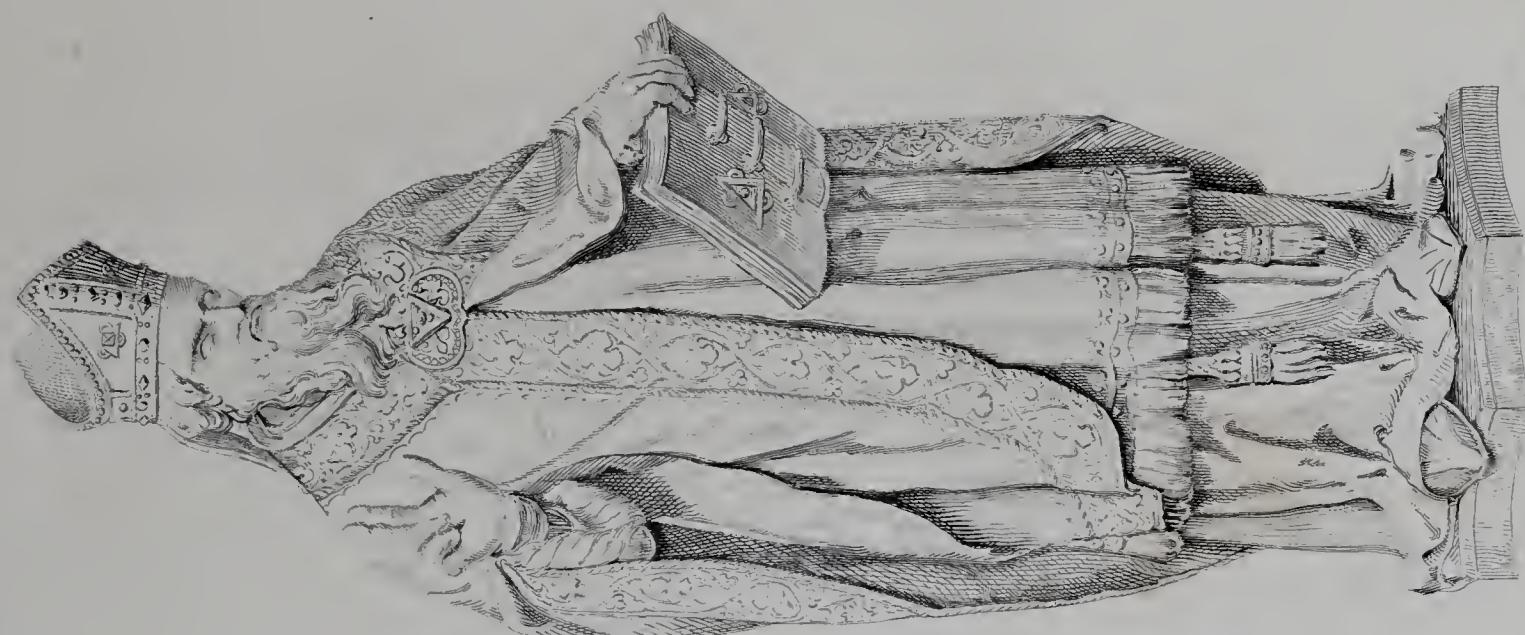




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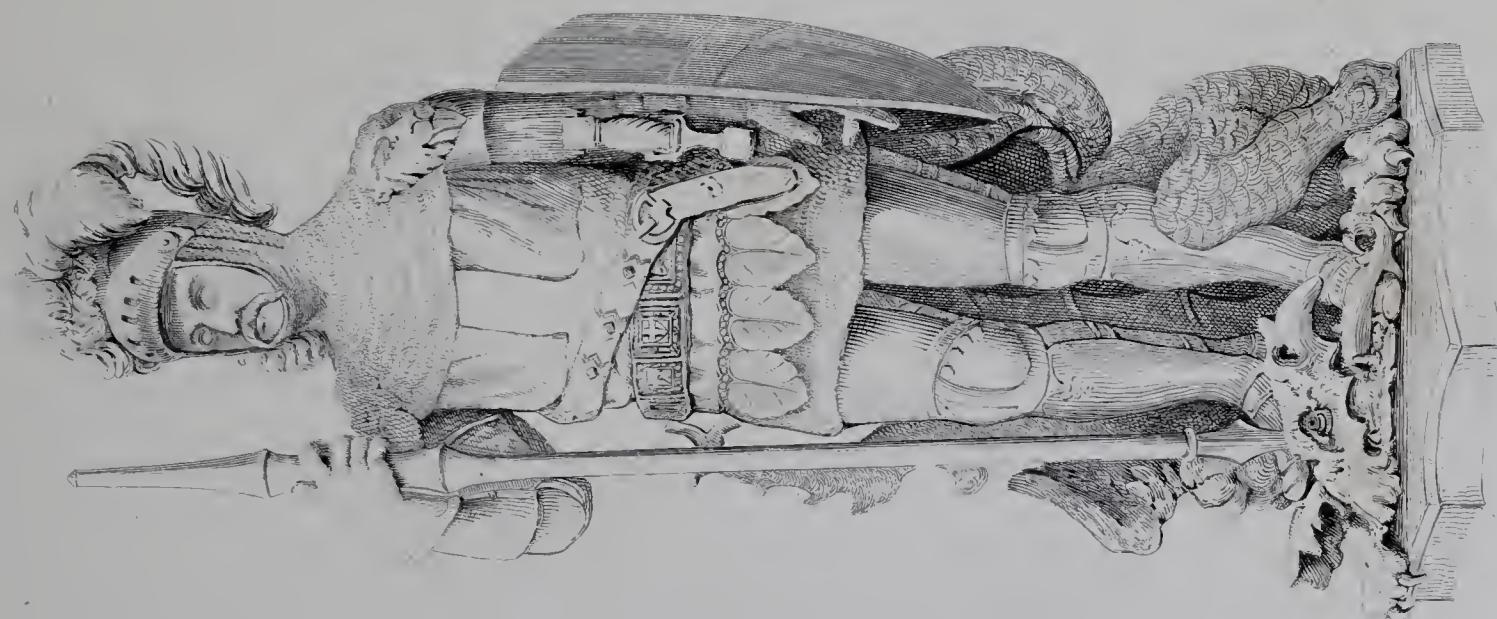
VICTORIA TOWER.

Interior View of Entrance to Royal Court



Saint Peter

ENG. BY E. CHAVAME



Saint George

SCULP BY J. THOMAS



Saint Andrew

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

VICTORIA TOWER.

INTERIOR VIEW OF THE ROYAL ENTRANCE.

THIS View represents the Royal Entrance to the New Palace, on the north side of the interior, under the Victoria Tower. It is composed similarly to the east side already described, the upper portion having five niches, the centre containing a statue of Her Majesty (of which a representation is given in the following plate), supported on each side by emblematical figures of Justice and Mercy: the two outer niches contain angels bearing scrolls with mottos.



The lower Archway, leading to the Royal Staircase, is surmounted by the Queen's Arms, supported by two angels; and will have rich metal doors, with the upper compartments glazed.



J. Johnson, F.S.A. del.

G. Hawkins lith.

THE ROYAL ENTRANCE, VICTORIA TOWER.

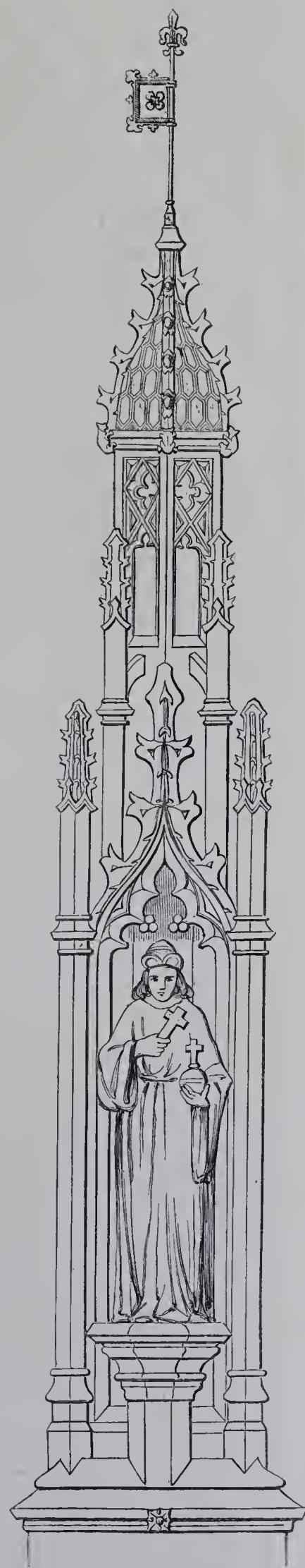
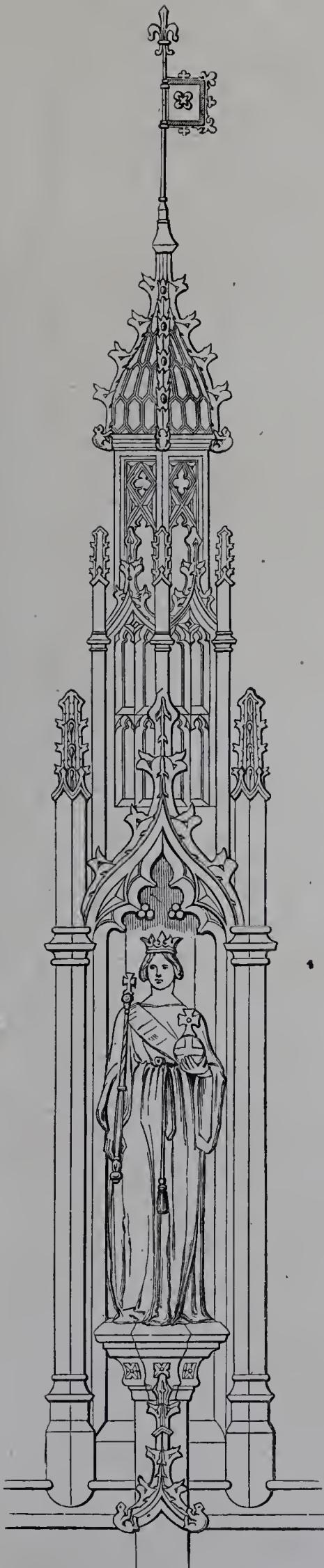
NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

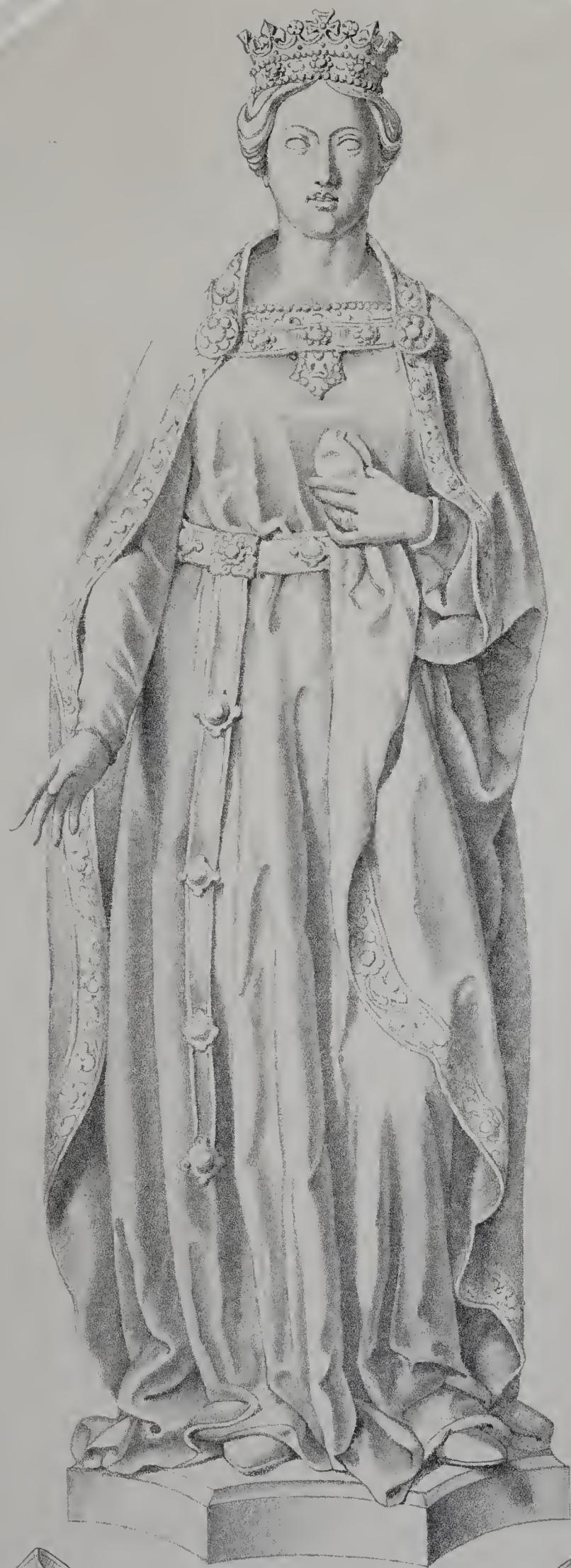
ELEVATION OF THE NORTH WING
TOWERS.

THE decorations of this portion of the River Front, appropriated as the Speaker's Residence, are, in every respect, similar to those already described to Plate IV. of the South Wing Towers.

BACK OF SOUTH WING TOWERS.

THIS view shews the upper portion of the Towers, with the Ventilating Shaft, or Smoke Turret, in the centre of east side of Royal Court. The accompanying woodcuts represent elevations of the front and rear pinnacles in the centre of the parapets of Towers. The front contains a statue of Her present Majesty, and the rear pinnacle a representation of King Edward the Confessor, the first monarch who built a Palace at Westminster.





VICTORIA REGINA

G. Hawkins lith.



J. Johnson E.S.A. delt.



BACK OF SOUTH WING. TOWERS

and Ventilating Shaft, from Roof of Black Rods Residence

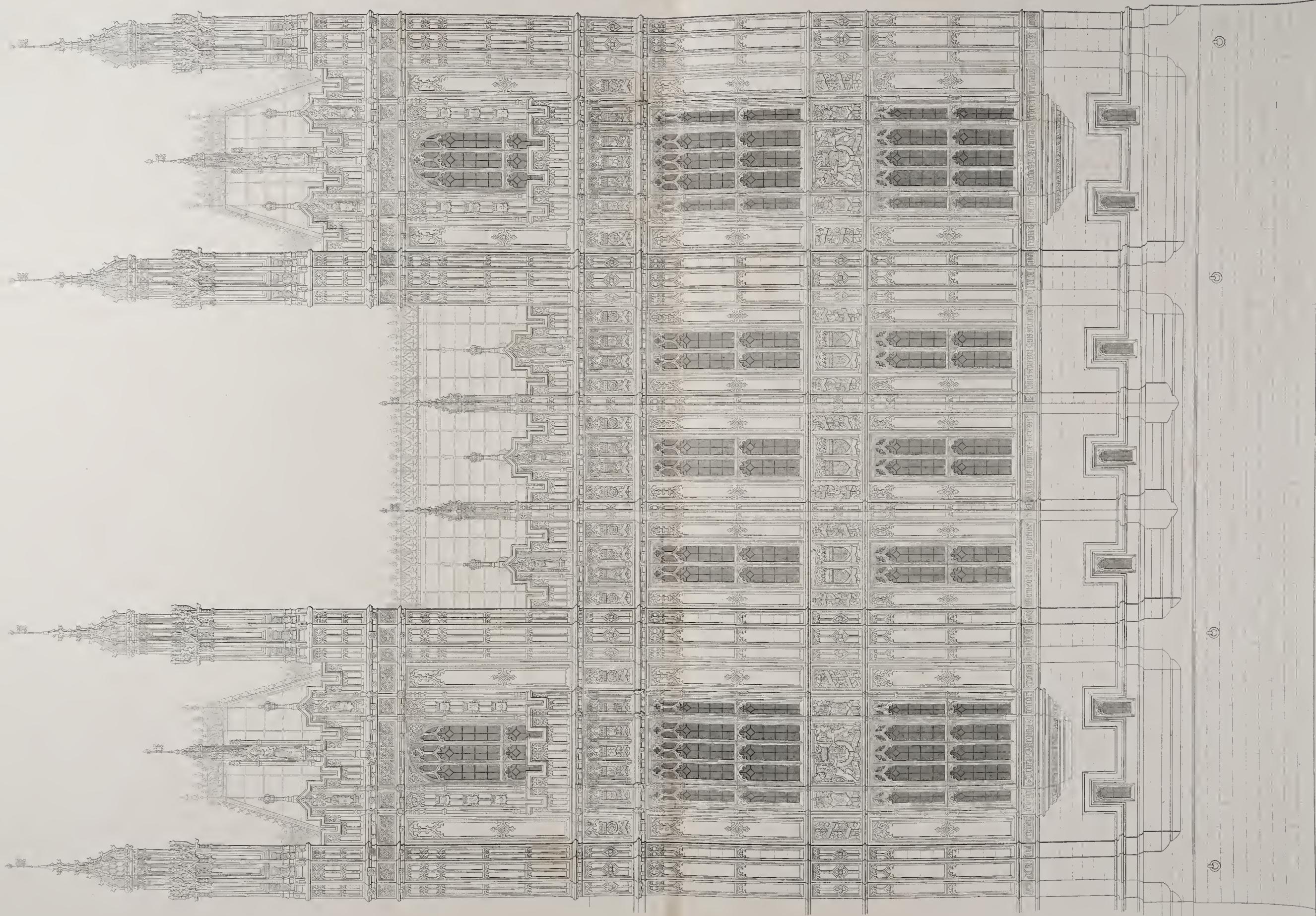


J. Johnson, F.S.A. delt.

J. Newman, Lith.

THE ROYAL COURT,

from the South West.



G. Somers Clarke des.

on Steel by A. P. Cutt.

THE SPEAKER'S CHAMBER
or Elevation of The Speaker's Chamber.

Scale of x v v x xx v. l. 181

Warrington & Son, 27, Strand.

THE CENTRE AND CURTAIN PORTIONS OF THE RIVER FRONT.

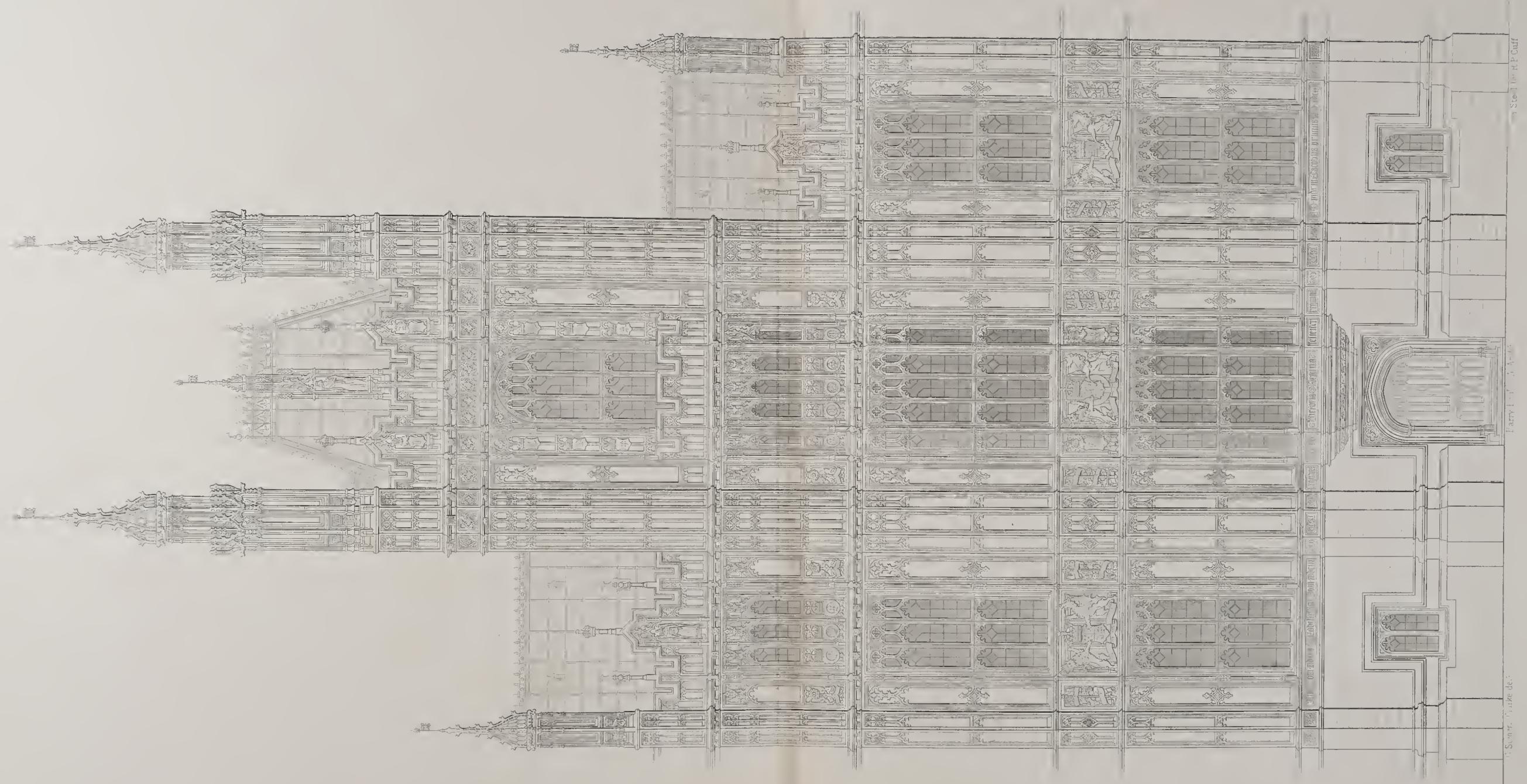
A description of the North and South Wing Towers of the River Front having been already given, it remains only to subjoin the intermediate portions, viz., the North and South Curtains and the Centre Portion.

The North and South Curtains, divided each of them into twelve bays by hexagonal buttresses, terminating with pinnacles, contain three floors above the vaults, viz., the Ground Floor nearly on a level with the Terrace, the Principal, and the One-Pair Floor; the Principal Floor is chiefly appropriated to Libraries and Select Committee Rooms for both Houses. The Apartments south of the Conference (or Centre) Room belong to the Lords, those on the north to the Commons, and the whole of the One-Pair Floor between the North and South Wing Towers are exclusively occupied as Committee Rooms for the Commons. The roofs have been fitted for the reception of Papers and Records, should they be required for that purpose. Large Cisterns or Tanks for Water are likewise fixed in the Roofs of the Towers.

The Centre Portion is composed of eleven bays, divided by buttresses, surmounted with pinnaeles, and flanked at either end by Towers and Gateways communicating with the Terraces from the interior of the building; it contains an additional or Two-Pair Floor, also appropriated to Committee Rooms for the Commons.

The most striking external decoration of the North and South Curtains and Centre Portion is the band of carving between the Principal and the One-Pair Floors. This band, commencing with the first bay of the South Curtain, next adjoining the South Wing Towers, and terminating at the last bay of the North Curtain, presents, in a series of coats of arms, with supporters, shields, and the proper quarterings, a Chronological Table of the reigning Sovereigns of England, from the Norman Conquest to the present time. In the narrow band below the cills of the Principal Floor Windows is inscribed, in Tudor characters, the name, date of accession, and date of death, of the Sovereign whose arms are exhibited in the band above.

The Decorative Sculpture in the panels below the windows of the Two Pair Floor of the Centre Portion consists of crowns, with the ribands, badges, and mottoes, of the three Orders of Knighthood, viz., the Rose, the Thistle, and Shamrock, answering to St. George of the Garter, St. Andrew, and St. Patrick. The remaining carvings and enrichments, all of them appropriate to their several positions, sufficiently define themselves, or have been previously described.



Centre and Left-hand Elevation of River Front

One Storey & 1½ of each in connection

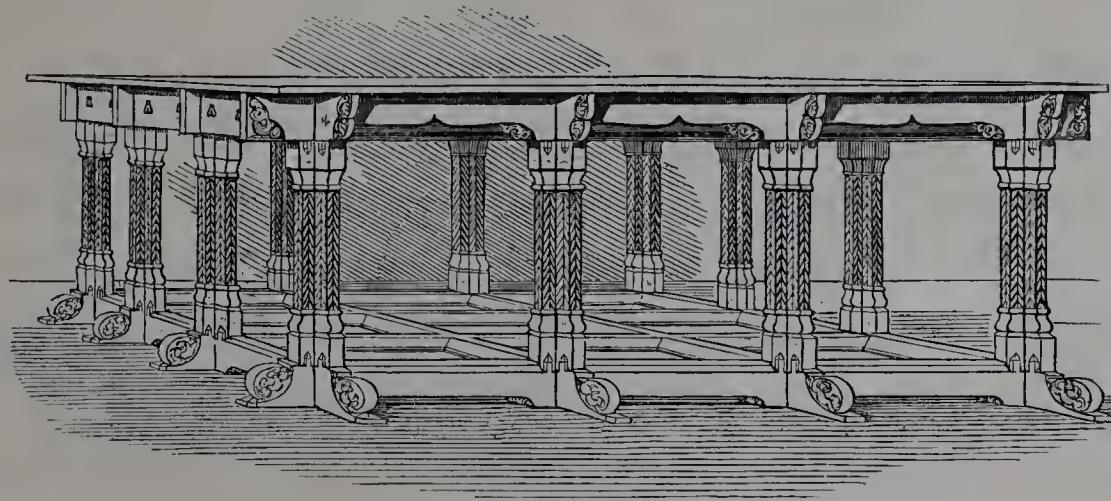
THE HOUSE OF LORDS.



ORNAMENT AT THE BACK OF STATE CHAIR.

WITHOUT doubt the Interior of the House of Lords is the finest specimen of Gothic civil architecture in Europe; its arrangements and decorations being perfect. Entering from the Peers' Lobby, the effect of the House is magnificent; the length and loftiness of the apartment, its finely proportioned windows, with the gilded and canopied niches between them; the Throne, glowing with gold and colours; the richly carved paneling which lines the walls; the roof, most elaborately painted; its massive beams and sculptured ornaments, and pendants richly gilded; all unite in forming a scene of Royal magnificence.

The House of Lords is 90 feet in length, 45 in breadth, and of the same height. In plan, the House is divided into three parts; the northern and southern being each considerably smaller than the centre, which constitutes the body or floor of the House, wherein are the Woolsack, Clerks' Table, &c.;



CLERKS' TABLE.

and on either side the seats for the Peers, in rows. The southern end is the part of the House in which the Throne is placed, and is also for the accommodation of distinguished foreigners, and others; whilst the northern has the Bar for its boundary, and is for the service of the House of Commons, when summoned to the Upper House to attend Her Majesty or the Royal Commissioners; and where, also, counsel stand during judicial investigations. The House is lighted by twelve lofty windows, six on each side, filled with stained glass, representing the Kings and Queens—both Consort and Regnant—of the United Kingdom, standing under canopies of elaborate design.

THE PAINTED WINDOWS.

ROYAL LINE OF ENGLAND, BEFORE THE UNION OF THE CROWNS.

I.			
William the Conqueror.	Matilda of Flanders.	William Rufus.	Henry I.
Matilda, Queen of Henry I.	Empress Matilda.	Stephen.	Matilda of Boulogne.
II.			
Henry II.	Eleanor of Guienne.	Richard I.	Berengaria of Navarre.
John.	Isabella of Angouleme.	Henry III.	Eleanor of Provence.

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

III.

Edward I.	Eleanor of Castile.	Edward II.	Isabella.
Edward III.	Philippa of Hainault.	The Black Prince.	Joan of Kent.
IV.			
Richard II.	Anne.	Henry IV.	Mary Bohun.
Henry V.	Katharine.	Henry VI.	Margaret of Anjou.
V.			
Edward IV.	Elizabeth Wydevile.	Edward, Prince of Wales.	Edward V.
Richard III.	Anne Neville.	Henry VII.	Elizabeth.
VI.			
Arthur, Prince of Wales.	Katharine of Aragon.	Henry VIII.	Anne Boleyn.
Jane Seymour.	Edward VI.	Mary.	Elizabeth.

ROYAL LINE OF SCOTLAND, BEFORE THE UNION OF THE CROWNS.

VII.

Robert Bruce.	Elizabeth de Burgh.	David II.	Joanna.
Robert II.	Elizabeth Mure.	Robert III.	Annabella Drummond.
VIII.			
David, Duke of Rothesay.	Marjory Douglas.	James I.	Jane Beaufort.
James II.	Mary of Guelders.	James III.	Margaret of Denmark.
IX.			
James IV.	Margaret.	James V.	Mary of Guise.
Mary.	Darnley.	James VI.	Anne of Denmark.

ROYAL LINE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

X.

Charles I.	Henrietta Maria.	Charles II.	Katharine of Braganza.
James II.	Mary of Este.	William III.	Mary.
XI.			
Anne.	George of Denmark.	Princess Sophia.	George I.
George II.	Queen Caroline.	Frederick, Prince of Wales.	Augusta, Princess of Wales.
XII.			
George III.	Queen Charlotte.	George IV.	Queen Caroline.
Princess Charlotte.	Duke of Kent.	William IV.	Queen Adelaide.

At both ends of the apartment are three archways, corresponding in size and mouldings with the windows; and on the surface of the wall, within the arches, are spaces for the frescoes. Those over the Throne are “The Baptism of St. Ethelbert,” painted by Mr. Dyce; “Edward the Third conferring the Order of the Garter on the Black Prince,” and the “Comittal of Prince Henry by Judge Gascoigne,” by Mr. Cope; the three at the back of the Strangers’ Gallery are “The Spirit of Religion,” by Mr. Horsley, “The Spirit of Chivalry,” and “The Spirit of Justice,” by Mr. Maclise.

The archways at the northern end of the House are very deeply recessed, affording space for the Strangers’ Gallery. Between the windows, the arches at the ends and in the corners of the House are niches, richly canopied; the pedestals within which are supported by demi-angels holding shields,

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

charged with the armorial bearings of the Barons who wrested Magna Charta from King John, and whose effigies, in all eighteen, will be placed in the niches.

Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury.	William, Earl of Aumale.
William, Earl of Salisbury.	Geoffry, Earl of Gloucester.
Henri de Londres, Archbisop of Dublin.	Saher, Earl of Winchester.
William, Earl of Pembroke.	Henry, Earl of Hereford.
Almeric, Master of the Knights Templars.	Roger, Earl of Norfolk.
Waryn, Earl of Warren.	Robert, Earl of Oxford.
William, Earl of Arundel.	Robert Fitzwalter.
Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent.	Eustace de Vesci.
Richard, Earl of Clare.	William de Mowbray.

The demi-angels, pillars, pedestals, and canopies, are all gilded, and the interiors of the niches elegantly diapered. Above the niches are corbels, whence spring spandrils to support the ceiling.

The Ceiling is flat, and is divided into eighteen large compartments; these are each again divided, by smaller beams, into four, having in their centres lozenge-formed compartments, deeply moulded. Different devices and symbols, carved, fill the lozenges, and all of them are gilded. Amongst the devices, and immediately over the Throne, is the Royal monogram, crowned, and interlaced by a cord, the convolutions of which are so arranged as to form loops at the corners; whilst similarly crowned and decorated, the monograms of the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert fill the lozenges over their respective seats. The cognizances of the White Hart, of Richard the Second; the Sun, of the House of York; the Crown, in a bush, of Henry the Seventh; the Falcon, the Dragon, and the Greyhound, are in some of the lozenges; whilst the Lion passant of England, the Lion rampant of Scotland, and the Harp of Ireland, fill others. Sceptres and orbs, emblems of regal power, with crowns; the scales indicative of justice; mitres and croziers, symbols of religion; and blunted swords of mercy; add their hieroglyphic interest: while crowns and coronets, and the ostrich plume of the Prince of Wales, form enrichments more readily understood, and equally appropriate. These devices are encircled by borders, in admirable intricacy; and all of them are most elaborate in workmanship. In the vacant corners, between the lozenges and the mouldings of the beams, the ceiling is painted of a deep blue, and surrounded by a red border, on which are small yellow quatrefoils. Within the borders are circles, Royally crowned; and from them proceed sprays of roses, parallel to the sides of the lozenges. The circles contain various devices and shields: amongst the former are the rose of England, the pomegranate of Castile, the portcullis of Beaufort, the lily of France, and the lion of England; and in the latter are the fanciful armorial bearings of those counties which ages since composed the Saxon Heptarchy. Where the lozenges are filled with the mitre, the circles are gules, and charged with a cross; and issuing from the circle are rays, instead of sprigs of roses. The whole are gilded, and enriched by colour. The ceiling is, as may be inferred, most striking in its appearance; the massy tie beams, apparently of solid gold, rich as they are with that precious metal, and the minute carving which fills up the lozenge-formed

compartments, aided by the colours of the devices, painted on the surface of the ceiling—produce a most imposing and gorgeous effect.

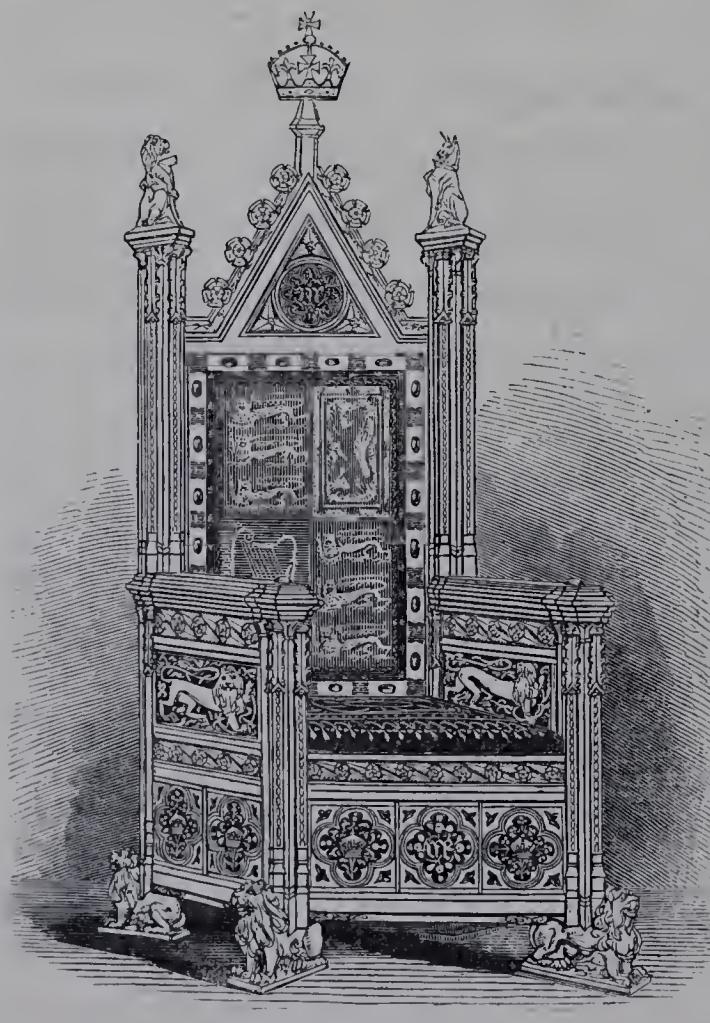
Under the windows the walls of the House are covered with oak paneling, of a varied pattern. In alternate panels are beautifully carved pillars, crowned with a small bust of one of the Kings of England. The pillars in the southern division of the House have pedestals affixed to them, on which are lions, sejeant, holding shields emblazoned with the arms of England. Above the panels, between each bust, runs the following inscription—"God save the Queen," in open-worked letters of the Tudor character. A canopy springs from this, the surface of which is gilded, and decorated with the armorial bearings of the various Lord Chancellors of England, from Adam, Bishop of St. David's, in 1377, to the present Chancellor, Lord Cottenham. These escutcheons present a remarkably rich and unique decoration; and the variety of colours so displayed is very striking. The arms of the various Sovereigns under whom the Chancellors have held office, are also similarly painted.

At the northern end of the House, the episcopal arms fill the spaces of the canopy. The front of the cove, or canopy, is moulded, and at every space corresponding to the pillars of the paneling is a small carved pendant; above it is a lion's head in strong relief, and thence spring the standards to the brass railing of the Gallery. This railing is of simple but exquisite design. The standards are partly twisted, and between each runs a rail, supported by segments of arches. Admission to this balcony is obtained from the upper Corridor, by small doorways under each window. A single row of seats runs along the Gallery. The paneling above the Gallery is very rich in its details. The remaining portion of the panels is filled with vine leaves and grapes in relief. Two elegantly carved slender pillars, with capitals of varied design, are at the angles of the windows, and one on either side of the doors under the latter: they support a cornice, above which a richly carved brattishing runs all round the House.

The centre of the southern end of the House is occupied by the Throne, and on either side of it, below the Gallery, is a doorway leading into the Victoria Lobby.

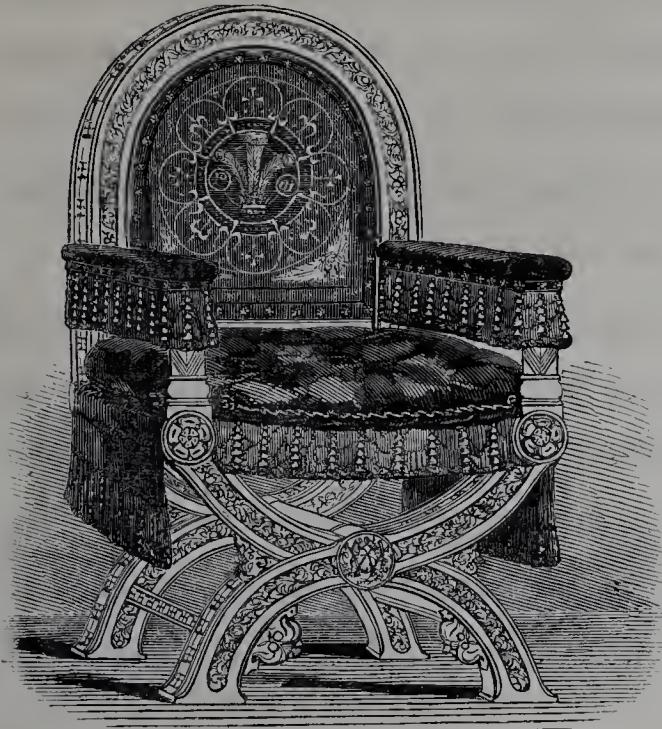
The Throne is elevated on steps, the central portion having three, and the sides two steps, covered with a carpet of richest velvet pile. The ground colour of the carpet is a bright scarlet, and the pattern on it consists of roses and lions, alternately. A gold-coloured fringe borders the carpet.

The Canopy to the Throne is divided into three compartments; the central one, much loftier than the others, is for her Majesty; that on the right hand for the Prince of Wales, and that on the left for Prince Albert. The back of the central compartment is paneled in the most exquisite manner. The three lowest tiers have lions passant of England, carved and gilded, on a red ground;

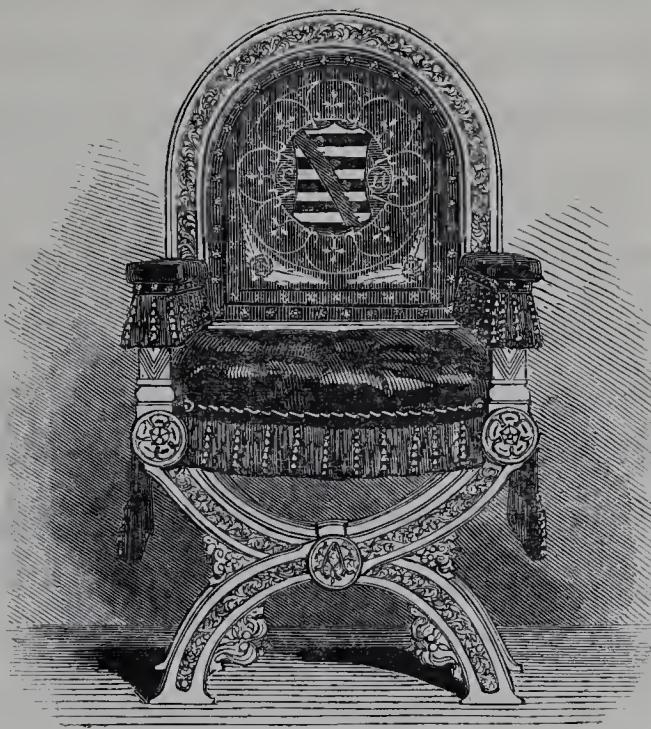


THE STATE CHAIR.

and above them is a wide panel, arched, and enriched with quatrefoiling, are the Royal Arms of England, surrounded by the Garter, with its supporters, helmet and crest, and an elaborate mantling, forming a



PRINCE OF WALES' CHAIR.



PRINCE ALBERT'S CHAIR.

rich and varied background. The motto "Dieu et mon Droit," is on a horizontal band of a deep blue tint. Above the brattishing is a series of five panels, with ogee arches. The crests of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, richly carved and gilded, fill the panels. The ceiling is flat, divided into many small squares. In the centre is the monogram V. R. surrounded by a border beautifully designed and carved. The flat surfaces of the ceiling are enriched by stars painted on them. As before mentioned, the overhanging canopy of the central division projects considerably before the sides, and is supported by spandrils rising from octagonal pillars, having small roses and fleur-de-lis wrought in trellis-work, with the most delicate execution, upon their several sides. The capital of these pillars are peculiarly beautiful, having a coronal form, with floreated enrichment. The spandrils are enriched with quatrefoil tracery, and in their angles are representations of St. George and the Dragon, beautifully executed. The sides of the canopy have deeply sunken panels, enriched with shields of the arms of England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, most beautifully carved, painted, and gilded. Affixed to the pillars supporting the canopy, are octangular pedestals, ornamented with quatrefoils, and having canopied and groined capitals, on the faces of which are shields charged with the escutcheons of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Upon these pedestals are figures of winged angels, sitting, and holding shields with the arms of England enamelled upon them.

The paneling at the sides, on either hand of the Chair of State, consists of two rows of open-worked arches, with elaborate tracery, and above them other panels filled with floreated enrichments of the most exuberant fancy.

Her Majesty's State Chair is particularly splendid in its enrichments; in general outline it is similar to the chair in which the Sovereigns of England have been wont to sit at their coronations, but in detail it differs widely from its plain prototype. The legs of the Chair, resting upon four lions couchant, have pinnacled buttresses on each side, those at the back being, of course, considerably higher than the front ones. The arms are boldly moulded, and in the sunken panels beneath them are lions passant. On

moulded capitals, above the pinnacles to the back legs, a lion and unicorn are seated holding scrolls. The back of the Chair is gabled, of lofty pitch; and within it, in a circle, is a quatrefoiled ornament, of eight points, having, in the centre, the monogram V. R. entwined by a cord. A broad border surrounds the square part of the back of the Chair, on which are, alternately, large and brilliant egg-shaped pieces of rock crystal, and lions within quatrefoils enamelled. The addition of crystals as enrichments to the Throne is a peculiarly happy idea; the effect, the sparkling brilliancy they impart, being peculiarly striking. Within this border are the Royal Arms of England, worked in embroidery on velvet.

The State Chairs for the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert, are exactly alike in form and general details, the only variations being in the embroidery on the velvet backs; and in the monograms. The backs are circular-headed. The velvet backs are most magnificent specimens of embroidery, and in design command unqualified praise, ornament and appropriateness being so happily blended.

The Chair of the Prince of Wales has the ostrich feathers most beautifully worked issuing from a coronet, having the motto "Ich Dien" under it, while, on either side of it, are the letters P. W. respectively. That of Prince Albert has his armorial bearings, and in circlets at the sides the letters P. A. are worked. The cushion to each seat is of crimson velvet, richly embroidered.

As every portion of her Majesty's Throne, and the chairs for the Princes, is gilded, some idea may be formed of their splendid appearance; and standing under a canopy of the richest design, glowing with gold and colours, they produce a magnificent effect.

The Footstool to the Queen's Throne is of oblong shape, about one foot four inches in length. The top is covered with the richest crimson velvet, and is embroidered in gold. The pattern is a rose of eight leaves, within a circular border, from whence small roses spray out towards the corners, and the whole is included in a border, to the outer form of the Footstool, of fleur-de-lis, &c. The tassels are of crimson silk and gold thread.

The side compartments of the canopy are alike in general architectural detail, but differ in heraldic insignia, the one side having the symbols of the Prince of Wales, blended with its architectural features; whilst the other has those relating to Prince Albert. On the pedestal, at the Prince of Wales's side, is a lion holding a shield, on which the arms of England are displayed; and on that at Prince Albert's, is a unicorn holding a shield, similarly charged.

The paneling is alike in both compartments, the lowest row containing fanciful bands, with rich foliage interwoven: the second and third series quatrefoils; and the fourth richly traceried ogee arches. Within the quatrefoils P. W. and P. A., respectively, are carved and gilded, relieved by a deep blue background. The arches in the upper row have shields of arms helmeted and crested with Royal crowns. Tall arched panels display the armorial bearings of the Prince, in gold and colours, surrounded by the Garter, and having crowns above them. On blue labels, under the arms, are the respective mottoes, "Ich Dien," and "Treu und Fest," in slightly raised letters. The arched coves are each divided into four panels by enriched ribs, the two central panels containing shields helmeted and mantled, in which, in the Prince of Wales's Canopy, are the armorial ensigns of the Principality, and the Royal Arms of England; and in Prince Albert's are the escutcheons of Saxe Coburg Gotha and England; the two outer

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

panels have lions and unicorns sitting, and holding banners displayed, on which are the triple ostrich feathers on an azure ground, and a red cross on a white ground, respectively.

In the centre at the northern end of the House is the Reporters' Gallery. The Strangers' Gallery is above the Reporters'; and, as before mentioned, is placed in the recesses of the great arches.

The Reporters' Gallery is most convenient, both in its arrangement and ease of access, the comfort of the gentlemen of the Press having been well studied.

From the floor of the House, the appearance of this Gallery is eminently beautiful. It projects several feet from the wall, and is supported by five arches, three in the front, and one at each end; the central arch in the front being of wider span than the others; the compartments over the centre door having within them the coat armour of the Saxon, Norman, Plantagenet, Tudor, Stuart, and Hanoverian houses painted on shields; whilst in the compartments over the side door are the arms of the Archiepiscopal sees, and some of the Bishoprics, in continuation of the series of Episcopal arms, emblazoned at this end of the room.



FRONT OF REPORTERS' GALLERY.

The front of the Gallery is divided into three compartments, to correspond to the doorways beneath; within them are sunken panels beautifully ornamented with the badges of the different Sovereigns of England. There are two ranges of seats in the Reporters' Gallery, the front has accommodation for ten persons, for whose use inkstands are sunk in a shelf. The arches under the Gallery, and the three small arches on either side of it, are hung with the richest red velvet, and a clock, the face of which is exquisitely enamelled, in colours, stands on a bracket in front of the Gallery.

The Bar is about nine feet wide and three deep; and each corner of the Bar is a post, having on its outer faces the monogram, V. R. within quatrefoiled circles. The angles of the posts are ornamented by moulding. The two inner posts of the Bar are crowned with small figures of the lion and unicorn holding shields; and the two outer are embattled. Affixed to the wall, on the right hand of the Bar, is the enclosed and elevated seat of the Usher of the Black Rod: it is paneled and decorated in corresponding style with the extreme ends of the Peers' seats, which have panels of extremely intricate treillage of vine, oak, rose, and thistle patterns, beautifully sculptured and pierced, let into them. That on the left for Peers' eldest sons, who have the privilege of standing on the steps of the Throne. The extreme ends of the seats rise in steps, corresponding to the steps on which the seats are elevated, and at their corners are badges of some of the Royal Houses of England; the white hart, dragon, greyhound, &c.

On each side of the House are two doors, one near either end, leading into corridors. The doors are paneled, with open-worked arches in the upper portion, glazed with plate glass.

The Corridors are very handsomely panelled, and ceiled with oak, extending the whole length of the

House. Their appearance is singularly rich and effective, the warm colour of the paneling harmonising thoroughly with the stained glass and the rich blue of the carpet; the windows are square-headed, divided by mullions, and tracered. The glass is richly diapered; and the motto "Dieu et mon Droit," in labels running diagonally, is many times repeated. In recesses opposite to the windows are seats cushioned and covered with red leather. In recesses, also, are branches for gas, and opposite the doors leading from the House, globe lights hang from the ceiling.

Above these principal Corridors are others, destitute of decoration, by which ingress is obtained to the Gallery of the House of Lords. This upper Corridor is lighted by small quatrefoil-shaped windows, and gas-lights are pendant from the roof.

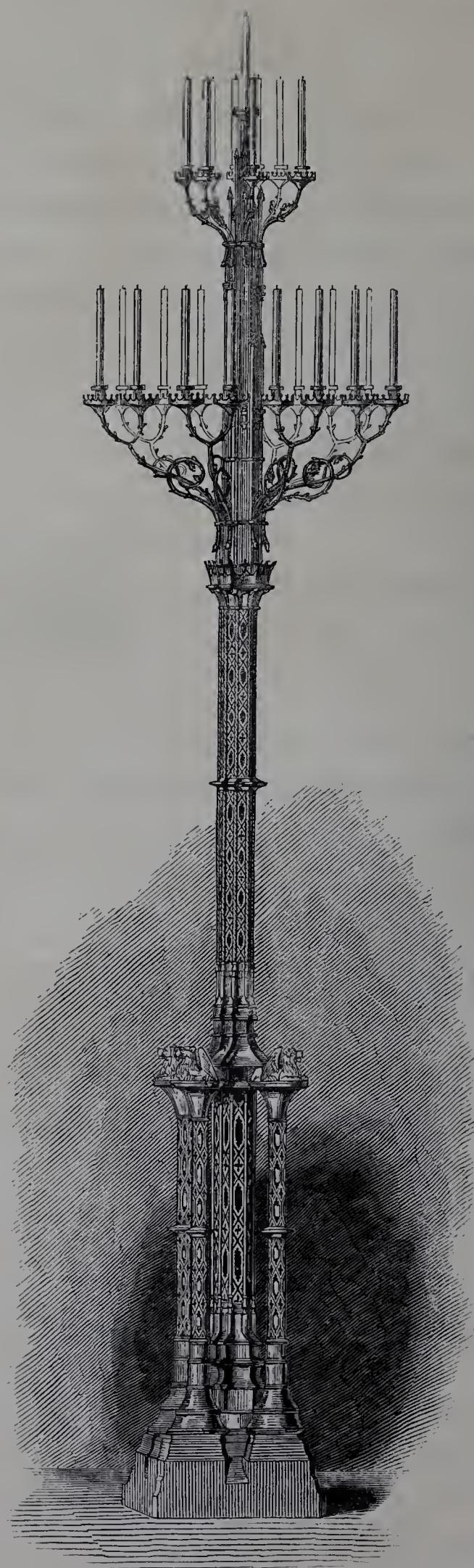
Two magnificent Candelabra of brass rise from the posts at the end of the Peers' seats. They are about twelve feet and a half high, and consist of a shaft, ornamented with a leaf pattern, and supported at the sides by short pillars, crowned with *fleurs de lis*; at about eight feet from the ground, the shaft has eight flying buttresses projecting from it; and from them, in curves, spring out branches, with sockets for lights. Above this series of lights, four others, of lesser dimensions, add to the general richness, and the whole is crowned by a single light, rising from the centre. The workmanship of these Candelabra is most elaborate, and worthy of their exquisite design.

There are two other beautiful specimens of Candelabra, of great richness of design, one on either side, a little in advance of the Throne.

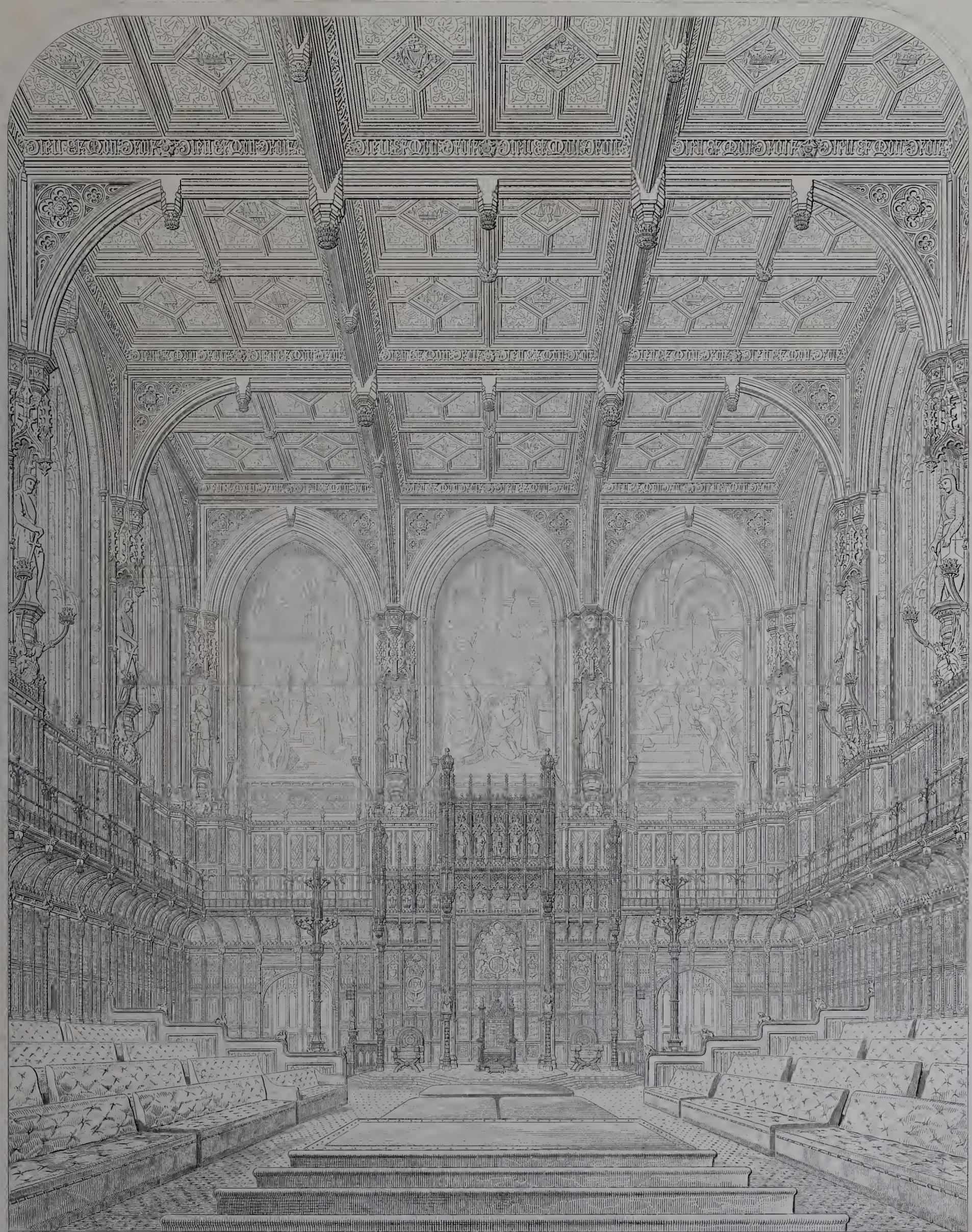
The seats for the Peers are covered with red morocco, and are extremely comfortable. There are four rows, each disposed in three ranges, so as to allow of free passage up the alleys between them.

The carpet is of deep blue, ornamented with roses in gold colour.

The whole of the excellent arrangements for the warming, lighting, and ventilation of the House of Peers, have been carried out in a most perfect manner by Mr. Barry.



STANDARD FOR GAS LIGHT.



G. SOMERS CLARKE, DEL.

CHARLES BARRY, R. A. ARCHT.

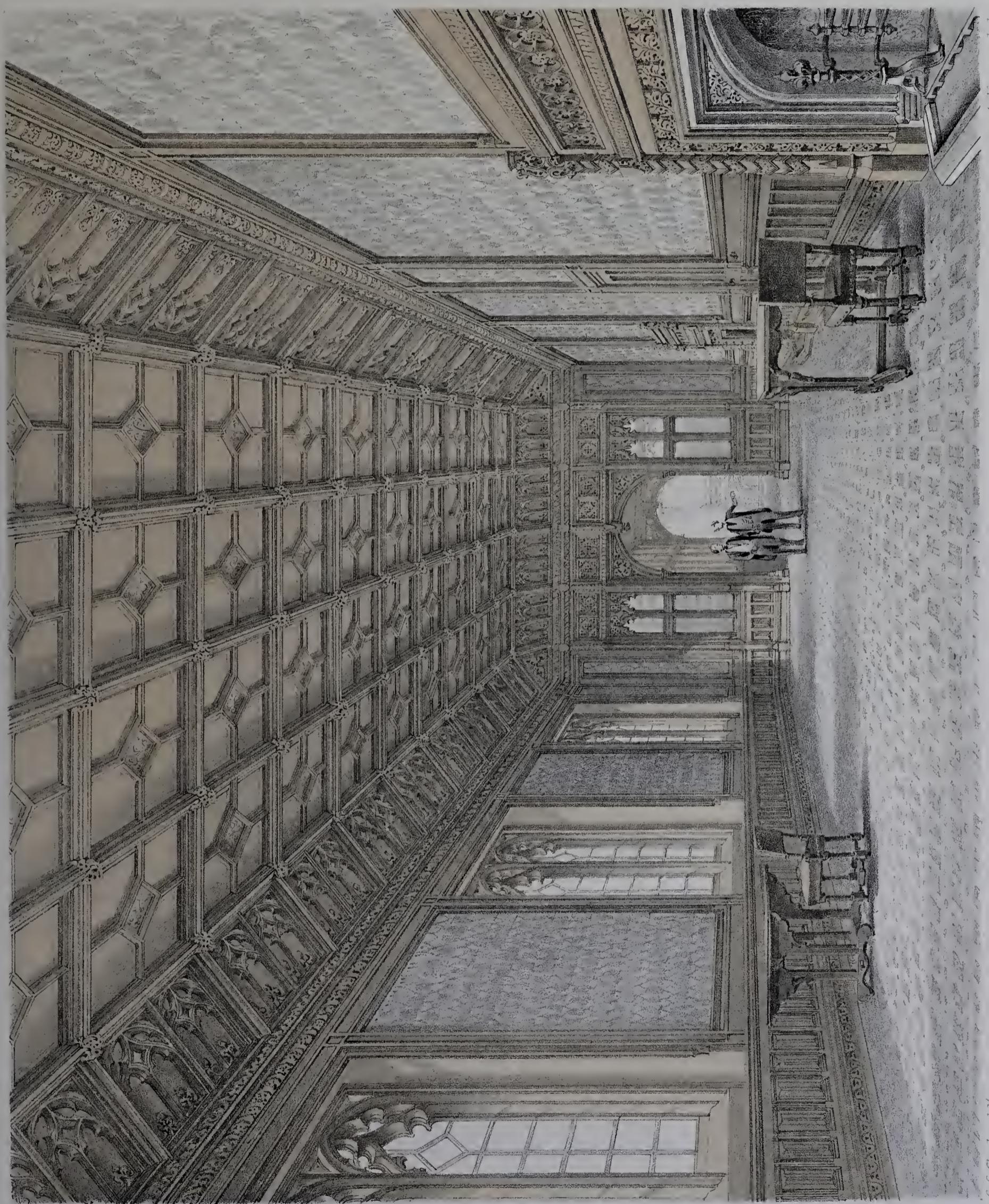
R. P. COFF SCULPT.

THE HOUSE OF PEERS
view of the Throne end

NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

THE PEERS' REFRESHMENT ROOMS.

THESE rooms are situated on the north side of the Bishop's Corridor, leading from the Victoria Hall to the Peers' Libraries. The extreme length is 102 feet, width 19 feet, and height 15 feet. In the centre is an elaborate carved oak screen, fitted as a bar and service room, and communicating by a staircase and lift with the kitchen below. The room in which the view is taken is used as a dining-room, and the portion beyond the screen is appropriated as a tea-room, to which a private access may also be obtained from the Library Corridor. The decorations of the ceiling are extremely simple, but in perfect harmony with the rooms, the panels being filled with a neat design, enriched with pomegranates, pines, and other fruit. At present the sides of the rooms have a crimson and gold paper, of elegant design; but it is proposed that the spaces will, at a future period, be decorated with paintings.



A. Lenman, lth

G. S. Clarke del'

THE TEEERS' REFECTION ROOMS.



THE PEERS' LIBRARY.

Warrington & Son, Strand

M. & N. HANFELL, IMP.



Entrance to Refreshment Rooms.

DEL & LITH.



Entrance to Library.

E T DOLBY

BISHOP'S COURT ROAD.

CHARLES BARRY, R.A. ARCHIT.

Warington & Son, Strand
W & N HANHART, M.P.

A
HISTORY
OF
THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER,
FROM THE MOST AUTHENTIC SOURCES, BY
HENRY T. RYDE.



THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER

CHAPTER I.

THORNEY ISLAND—WESTMINSTER—FOUNDATION OF THE ABBEY AND PALACE—SITUATION OF ENGLAND
IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THE CONQUEST BY WILLIAM OF NORMANDY—IMPORTANCE OF THE
CLERGY—DEDICATION OF THE ABBEY BY EDWARD THE CONFESSOR—THE PALACE
CONSTANTLY USED AS A ROYAL RESIDENCE.



THE principal object of this work being to give a detail of precise facts and indisputable records, without entering into vague disputation as to a particular date or defined boundary, when this but leads into a tedious discussion, which at last cannot be resolved, or if resolved, determines no very important truth or historical event, so we shall not at the outset intrude upon our readers the many and various opinions as to the site of Thorney Island.

It will be enough for us to record that a portion of London, now known as Westminster, was, in the beginning of the eighth century, called Thorney Island; and this is corroborated by a Charter still in existence, granted by Offa, King of Mercia, in 785, in which he calls a portion of this ground “Torneia in loco terribili;” whence, we may presume, that it was hitherto an uncultivated and lonely waste.

By some the limits of Thorney Island are confined to the extent bounded on the north by Manchester Buildings; by others it has been extended to the Privy Gardens. It is enough for us to know, that in this spot Offa, King of Mercia, “for the love of Almighty God gave to Saint Peter “and the Lord’s people living in the vicinity of Thorney Island, which was also called Westminster, a “certain portion of land, &c.” Westminster was so called in reference to its position to St. Paul’s, (which was the East Minster,) and was at the (then) other extremity of London and its immediate suburbs.

Stowe, in his “Survey of London,” a work invaluable alike for the simplicity and evident veracity of its details, assigns sometime about 616 for the foundation of the first Church or Abbey at Westminster; but a period of twelve years earlier has been declared as the time of the first construction or dedication. The difference of dates may have arisen from the laying of the first stone and the completion of the edifice.

Bishop Usher, deriving his information from Fleta, quotes a much more remote period for the foundation, and says, “ From the primitive age of the Christian faith among the Britons, that is, from “ the time of King Lucius, who in 184 A. D. is said to have received the Divine Law of Christ, the “ Abbey of Westminster was founded, and dedicated to the honour of God, and specially consecrated to “ the burials of Royal Families, and a receptacle for the jewels and adornments of kings and their “ families.”

We take leave to doubt this legend, and prefer the statement of Stowe, who informs us that the origin and first foundation was ascribed to Sigebert, King of the East Saxons, who, having embraced Christianity, and been baptized by Melitus, Bishop of London, built (in order to shew himself a Christian indeed) “ a Church to the honour of God and Saint Peter in the west side of the Cittie of “ London,” some short time before 616; and there is no doubt that a monastery stood in Thorney Island at a very early period of the 7th century; and the application of the phrase quoted by the old writers, “ Thorneia in loco terribili,” may simply refer to the loneliness of the spot, which was unquestionably at that period only inhabited by the monks resident in the monastery, and was deserted by them during the time England was invaded and held by the Danes in the 8th, 9th, and 10th centuries: nor was it again tenanted until it was rebuilt about the year 960 by Edgar, at the instigation of Dunstan, whom he had made Archbishop of Canterbury and Bishop of Worcester, and then twelve monks of the Benedictine Order were brought to Thorney Abbey.

It is believed that Canute, the first of the Danish kings, who was a great encourager of learning, and patronised the monks in consequence, built a royal dwelling somewhere in Westminster, which was destroyed by fire, about the year 1036-7. This is, however, uncertain, and the earliest record of the existence of a palace in this site is to be found in a Charter given by Edward the Confessor to the Abbot of Ramsay, about 1054. Of the Palace of Westminster, Stowe says, the antiquity is uncertain, but that Edward the Confessor resided and died there (1066); and Norden relates, that in the time of this prince a palace at Westminster was destroyed by fire; it is therefore more than probable that Edward the Confessor rebuilt it, and Lambard conjectures that the Old Palace of Westminster had been the Royal Residence ever since the reign of this king, who was very devout, and to whom Waltham Cross, Lincoln, and Exeter Cathedrals, owed their rise and original endowments. The Abbatial Church of Westminster was dedicated by Edward to St. Peter 28th Dec., 1065, and the Charter of Privileges granted to it is said to be the first which had the great Seal of England. This fabric was pulled down and rebuilt by Henry III.

As Edward the Confessor may be called the last of the Anglo-Saxon kings (for Harold II., his successor, reigned but a few months,) it may not be deemed irrelevant to the History of the Palace of Westminster, to give a brief sketch of the condition of society at this very eventful period in the annals of British civilization.

Edward convoked a general assembly of the nation; the first germ of a representative system; and having resolved to adopt the Code of Laws of Alfred the Great, he had them drawn up in the Latin

tongue, and collected into a body, whence they were called the Laws of Edward the Confessor; and he, availing himself of the survey of all England, made first by King Alfred, caused the Domes-day book to be made, which was afterwards perfected by William the Conqueror. Having been educated in Normandy, where he had been favourably received by the Duke Robert, he preferred the Normans to the highest places in church and state, introducing into England the French tongue and customs.

It has been estimated that at the close of the Anglo-Saxon period the population of England amounted to 1,800,000. In thirty-four counties, the burgesses and citizens are calculated at 17,105; villains to 102,704; bordars to 74,823; cottars to 5,947; serfs or thralls to 26,553; the remaining population consisting of freemen, ecclesiastics, knights, thanes, and landowners. Two-thirds of the entire population subsisted in different degrees of servitude, though the persons who were strictly speaking slaves were not more than one out of seven of the higher laborious classes of villains, bordars, or cottars.

The price of a serf was quadruple that of an ox; slaves and cattle forming the living money, and passing current in the payment of debts and in the purchase of commodities, at a value fixed by law; thus supplying, in some degree, the deficiency of cash. The manumission of a slave to be legal, had to be performed in public, in the market, in the hundred court, or in the church, at the foot of the principal altar; the lord touching the head of the slave with his hand presented him to the sheriff, bailiff, or priest, gave him a lance and a sword, and told him the way was open, and that he was at liberty to go where-soever he pleased.

In Sir Walter Scott's splendid romance of Ivanhoe, there is a scene of this kind, when Cedric the Saxon frees his 'born thrall Gurth the swineherd,' which is accurately described alike in the form of the emancipation and the language placed in the mouth of the Anglo Saxon Thane. Our readers are doubtless too familiar with the work to render any extract necessary in this place.

The food, as now, consisted of meat and bread; the drinks were various. Ale was an early British beverage, and has retained its popularity when other liquors are forgotten but in name: the liquors provided for the Royal Banquet in the reign of Edward the Confessor were wine, mead or metheglin, ale, hippocras, pigment, morat, and cider. The wine was principally imported. Ale was the favourite drink of the Anglo Saxons and Danes, as it had been of their German ancestors; mead was derived from honey; hippocras was perhaps wine with spices in it; pigment was a sweet liquor, possibly the wort before the bitter was infused; and morat was made of honey distilled with the juice of mulberries.

In the early part of this (the 11th) century, the roads between England and Rome were so crowded with pilgrims, that the very tolls they paid were objects of importance to the princes through whose dominions they passed; and very few Englishmen in these days of superstition, when monkish sway was absolute, believed they could attain to Paradise without paying the compliment of a pilgrimage to St. Peter at Rome, who kept the keys. The Pope and Roman Catholic Clergy carried on a lucrative traffic in relics, of which they had inexhaustible stores.

Kings, nobles, and prelates, purchased pieces of the real cross, or whole legs and arms of the Apostles

and Saints dying in the odour of sanctity, whilst others, with more scanty means, were compelled to content themselves with toes, fingers, or bones of saints of lower degree.

Agelnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury, when he was at Rome in 1021, purchased from the Pope the arm of Saint Augustin for six thousand pounds weight of silver, and sixty pounds weight of gold—a prodigious sum. It may have been the policy as well as the devotion of Edward the Confessor which induced him to build so many holy edifices and patronise the ecclesiastics, that he might induce his wealthier subjects to remain at home, instead of squandering their money in foreign lands, and enriching remote churches and priests; and at his death more than one-third of all the lands in England were in the possession of the clergy, and exempted from all taxes, and for the most part from military service. These circumstances may help to account for the long depression and slow acquisition of liberty by the people, exhausted as they were by taxation and exactions.

The lower classes of the Anglo Saxons were mostly in a servile state: the clergy and the opulent had domestic servants who were qualified to supply them with those articles of trade and manufacture which were in common use. Hence in the monasteries we find Architects, Smiths, Carpenters, Millers, Illuminators, Fishermen, &c. &c. Smiths and Carpenters were the most numerous, because the most in demand, as ministering to the chief secular pursuits of the time—War and Agriculture. The trade of a Shoemaker was a very comprehensive craft, uniting, as it did, branches which now form distinct businesses; for in those days he fabricated shoes, leather, hose, bottles, bridles, thongs, trappings, flasks, wallets, pouches, belts, &c. &c.

Besides the persons thus engaged, the Clergy were the principal architects, draftsmen, and merchants. Thus a monk is described as skilled in smith-craft: Dunstan, besides being able to draw and paint the patterns for a lady's robe, was also a smith, and worked in all the metals. Amongst others of his labours, he made two great bells for the church at Abingdon, and his friend Ethelwold, the Bishop, made two other bells for the same place, and “a wheele full of small belles, much gilded, to be turned round for its ‘musick on feast daies.’” It was enacted by the law (says Turner in his History of the Anglo Saxons), that the Clergy should pursue such occupations, for Edgar ordered, “we command every priest to ‘increase knowledge, and diligently to learn some handicraft.’”

The invention of the musical scale or gamut in 1022 by an Italian monk tended to diffuse a taste for music, and church music greatly improved in consequence, and its inventor (Guido Aretino) was sent for thrice to Rome, to explain and teach it to the clergy of that city.

In the 7th century Benedict, Abbot of Weremouth, procured men from France who not only glazed the windows of his church and monastery, but taught the Anglo Saxons the art of making glass for windows, lamps, drinking vessels, and for other uses. The arts of colouring and staining glass were known, and the figures of Alfred and his grandson Athelstan, in the window of the Library of All Souls College, Oxford, were probably painted not long after the age in which these princes flourished.

Picture painting was common for the embellishment of churches. A picture of Christ drawn by Dunstan, with his own figure prostrate at Jesus' feet, and sacred inscriptions in his own hand-writing, are still preserved in the Bodleian Library.

The art of dying scarlet with the help of an insect was discovered about the year 1000, and weaving and embroidery were practised. Edward the Elder had his daughters taught the use of their needle and distaff. Spinning was the common occupation of the Saxon ladies. Alfred, in his will, called the females of his family the “Spindle-Side.” So Egbert, when entailing his estates in his male descendants, to the exclusion of the females, says, “to the Spear-Side, and not to the Spindle-Side.” Of the skill and industry of the ancient “Spinsters” we have an extraordinary instance in the tapestry still preserved in the Cathedral of Bayeux.

This curious relic of antiquity is a vast linen web 214 feet long, and 2 feet broad, on which is embroidered the history of the Conquest. It is supposed to have been executed by English women, under the superintendence of Matilda, wife of William I. Many of the figures are without stockings, though more are without shoes. Wooden shoes, now esteemed the marks of the greatest indigence and misery, were worn by the greatest princes of Europe in the 9th and 10th centuries.

The Anglo Saxons, who were unacquainted with the building arts, destroyed the magnificent structures left by the Romans; nor did they much improve in the knowledge of architecture for two centuries after their arrival. During this period masonry was quite unknown and unpractised in this island; the walls of churches, and even cathedrals, were built of wood. Towards the end of the 7th century masonry was partially restored, and some other arts connected with it, introduced by two ecclesiastics who had visited Rome. These were the famous Wilfred, Bishop of York, and Benedict Biscop, founder of the Abbey of Weremouth. Wilfred was a great architect, and erected several structures at York, Ripon, and Hexham, which were the admiration of the age.

Thus all that was done in arts, polities, or improvements, originated from the clerical influence, and tended to increase and confirm its ever growing aggrandisement. There is very little doubt but that the reconstruction of St. Peter’s Church and the Monastery at Westminster proceeded at the same time with the Palace, the former being built with transepts, the earliest specimen of the kind in England, the primitive Saxon churches having been built without them.

Edward resolved to dedicate his church in the most impressive manner, and summoned a general assembly of all the Bishops, Abbots, and great men of his kingdom, and as the Saxon Chronicle, which is now preserved in the Library at Christchurch, Canterbury, declareth, “King Edward came to “Westminster about midwinter, and the minster there, which he had himself built, he let be hallowed “on Childermas Day, Dec. 28th, and he died on the eve of Twelfth Day.”

Robert of Gloucester states, that he died on the 4th January, 1066, immediately after he had related the vision, in which the calamities, which were so soon to desolate his country, were revealed to him.

Howel, an historian, whose accuracy and research there is no reason to doubt, states, that Edward the Confessor died in the ‘Painted Chamber;’ and this is corroborated by Baker in his Chronicle; and the fact, which has never been controverted, is important in two particulars; the first, as confirming the existence of the Palace of Westminster as a royal residence at this early period, and the second, that the

Painted Chamber, which has endured to our time, was then existing, and formed one of the State Chambers of the Palace.

At a later period 1477, the ceremonial of the marriage of Richard, Duke of York, son of Edward IV., is said to have taken place in this chamber, which is styled Saint Edward's Chamber, and many subsequent historical references are constantly made to it: amongst others we may cite, that Edward Coke, in his fourth institute, says, that the causes of Parliament were in ancient time shewed in the 'Chambre depeint,' or Saint Edward's Chamber.

Mr. Smith, in his very excellent work, the "Antiquities of Westminster," from which we shall borrow largely in our progress, has been at much pains to trace out the history of the Painted Chamber; and he tells us that it was not until lately that the appellation 'Painted' was accounted for, when, on removing the tapestry, paintings, containing a multitude of large figures, and representing battles, were discovered on its walls.

Neither written evidence, nor tradition, exist as to the period when these were done, nor was there any reason from anything that was generally known, to suppose that there ever had been any such paintings until the disclosure above-mentioned. They were certainly as old as 1322, and probably older, for in a Manuscript Itinerary of Simon Simeon and Hugo the Illuminator, in the year 1322, now in the Library of Bennet College, Cambridge, and mentioned by Mr. Gray in a letter 25th Feb., 1768, to Lord Orford (then Mr. Walpole), a passage occurs, of which this is the translation: "At the other end of "London City is a monastery of Black Monks, named Westminster, in which all the Kings of England are "constantly and in common buried; and to the same Monastery almost immediately joined that "famous palace of the King, in which is that well known Chamber (illa vulgata camera) on whose walls "all the histories of the wars of the whole Bible are painted beyond description (ineffabiliter) and the "most complete and perfect inscriptions in French, to the great admiration of the beholders, and with the "greatest regal magnificence." We shall have occasion again to refer to these paintings, as connected with an important era in the annals of the fine arts, indeed no other than the origin of oil painting; but for the sake of following up the details of the Palace in proper order, we return to the events immediately subsequent to the death of Edward the Confessor.

His successor Harold reigned but for a very short space, which was wholly occupied in military preparations and defensive warfare. He fell, and the Conqueror William reigned in his stead, who was more intent on despoiling monasteries than maintaining them. In 1074, a period of his reign when all English prelates "were sifted to the branne," a synod was held in the church at Westminster by Archbishop Lanfranc, to examine, according to the avowed object, as to the qualification and conduct of the clergy, "yet with the covert design of making room for the newly arrived Normans," by ejecting such of the Bishops and Abbots as had but little learning and less influence. At this synod Wulstan, Bishop of Winchester, was charged with being "a most illiterate and foolish man, and unfit for the "station he held; a very idiot, unacquainted with the French language, and incapable either to instruct the "Church, or counsel the King." His pastoral staff and ring were therefore demanded of him by Lanfranc

in the king's name; but Wulstan, grasping his staff with an unmoved countenance, made this reply: "I know, my Lord Archbishop, that I am entirely unfit for, and unworthy so high a station, being undeserving of the honour and unequal to the task: however, I think it unreasonable that you should demand that staff which I never received from you; yet, in some measure, I submit to your sentence, and will resign it; but consider it just to make that resignation to King Edward the Confessor, who conferred it on me." Thus ending (continues the credulous chronicler), he left the synod, and crossing the church to King Edward's tomb, said, whilst standing before it, "Thou knowest, O holy king! how unwillingly I undertook this office, and even by force, for neither the desire of the prelates, the petition of the monks, nor the voice of the nobility, prevailed till your commands obliged me; but see, a new king, fresh laws, and another bishop, pronounce a new sentence. Thee they accuse of a fault for making me a bishop, and me of assurance for accepting the charge; nevertheless, to them I will not, but to thee I resign my staff." Then raising his arm he placed the staff upon the tomb, which was of stone, and leaving it went arrayed as a monk, and sat with them in the Chapter House. When this was known in the synod a messenger was sent for the staff, but he found it adhere so firmly to the stone, that it could by no means be removed; nor could either the King or the Archbishop himself disengage it from the tomb. Wulstan was then sent for, and the staff readily submitted to his touch, which being considered as a confirmation of the miracles, he was allowed to retain its Episcopal dignity. Such implicit credit was given to this story that, according to the annals of Burton Abbey, King John urged it to Randolph, the Pope's Legate, as a proof of the right of English kings to nominate bishops.*

No king has been more respected by his subjects than Edward the Confessor, whether as the restorer of the Anglo-Saxon line, or for his learning and unquestionable piety. The miracles effected in that age found the greater and more ready credulity from these facts, and the love of his name and his race was not extinguished even by the iron grasp of the tyrannous and sordid Normans.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, one of our most invaluable national records, extending from the time of Cæsar's invasion to the middle of the 12th century, informs us, that "King Edward came to Westminster at midwinter (1065), and there caused to be consecrated the Minster, which himself had built to the glory of God and of Saint Peter, and of all God's Saints; and the Church hallowing was on Childermas Day, and he died on Twelfth Day Eve, and him they buried in the same Minster as it hereafter sayeth." Then comes the following from the same chronicle:—

"A. D. 1066, and King Edward was buried on Twelfth Day (*i. e.* the day he died) within the newly consecrated Church at Westminster, and Harold the Earl succeeded to the Kingdom of England, and he was crowned as King on Twelfth Day (the same day Edward died and was buried; from which, it may be presumed, that Harold was in the Palace at the time of Edward's death.) And William the Earl (of Normandy) landed at Hastings on St. Michael's Day, and Harold came up from the north, and fought against him before all his army came up; and there he fell and his two brothers, Girth and Leofwin, and William subdued this land, and came to Westminster; and Archbishop Aldred consecrated him King, and men paid him tribute, and delivered him hostages, and afterwards bought their land."

* Vide Brayley's 'History of the Abbey Church of St. Peter, Westminster.'

The Easter following Matilda, wife of William the Conqueror, came to England, and was consecrated Queen by Archbishop Aldred at Westminster. In 1069 Egelric, or Elfric, Abbot of Peterburgh, was tried before the king *in curia* at Westminster. The Conqueror is said “to have enlarged the Palace to “the northward;” but this is questionable, although there is no doubt but he passed much of his time and transacted the greater part of his business there; and when Edgitha, Queen of Edward the Confessor, died in 1075 at Winchester, “seven nights before Christmas the king caused her to be brought to “Westminster with great pomp, and laid her by her lord King Edward; and the king was at Westminster “during Christmas, and there all the Britons who had been at the bridal feast at Norwich (when Earl “Ralph married William Fitz-Osburne’s daughter, and a conspiracy was plotted to dethrone William,) “were brought to justice; some were blinded, others banished: thus were the traitors to William “subdued.”

We are told by the monkish chronicler, that King William was held in much reverence: he wore his crown three times in every year when he was in England; at Easter he wore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster, and at Christmas at Gloucester, and at these times all the principal men of England were with him, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots and Earls, Thanes and Knights. The great civil event in the life and reign of William I. was the compilation of the famous Doomsday Book, or Rotulus Wintoniæ, called also Liber Wintoniæ; and its origin and arrangement are thus described in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.

“At midwinter (1084) the king was at Gloucester with his Witan, and he held his court there five days; and afterwards the “Archbishop and Clergy held a synod during three days; and Maurice was there chosen to the bishopric of London, William to that of “Norfolk, and Robert to that of Cheshire: they were all clerks to the king.

“After this the king had a great consultation, and spoke very deeply with his Witan concerning ‘this land, how it was held, and “what were his tenantry.’ He then sent men over all England into every shire, and caused them to ascertain how many hundred hides of “land it contained, and what lands the king possessed therein, what cattle there were in the several counties, and how much revenue he “might receive yearly from each. He also caused them to write down how much land belonged to his Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, “Earls, and what property every inhabitant of Britain possessed, either in land or cattle, and how much money this was worth. So very “narrowly did he cause the survey to be made, that there was not a single hide or rood of land, nor—it is shameful to relate that which “he thought no shame to do—was there an ox, or a cow, or a pig passed by, and that was not set down in the accounts, and then all these “writings were brought to him.”

William Rufus was consecrated and crowned King by Lanfranc in the Abbey Church of Westminster, on the 26th of September, 1087.

CHAPTER II.

ADDITIONS TO THE PALACE BY SUCCESSIVE MONarchs—DESTROYED BY FIRE SEVERAL TIMES AND REBUILT—HENRY VIII. THE LAST MONARCH WHO RESIDED THERE—THE PAINTED CHAMBER—HOUSE OF LORDS—HOUSE OF COMMONS, etc. etc.

HAVING thus established the facts that the Palace of Westminster was originally built by Edward the Confessor, who occupied it and died there, and was used as his palatial residence by William the Conqueror, our space will now only allow us to take a very cursory view of the Palace as it is connected with the principal incidents of English History.

Many additions were made to the building from the time of the Confessor to the reign of Richard II.; and it continued to be a royal residence until the reign of Henry VIII., the limits of the Palace being by degrees much extended. Messrs. Britton and Brayley, who have very carefully investigated every detail, state, that the boundaries of the Palace in its fullest extent were the River Thames on the east, and Bridge-street on the north; the west being limited to the precincts of St. Margaret's Church and Westminster Abbey, behind Abingdon-street, and the south extending to College-street, where, in former times, ran a small stream, called the Great Ditch (now a sewer), on the outer side of the exterior wall of the Palace Garden. What appears to have been the private or lesser Palace, stood on the western side of the enclosed demesne; and it was probably the destruction of the lesser Palace of Westminster by fire in 1535-6, that occasioned Henry VIII. to remove to York Place, Whitehall, and to St. James'.

William Rufus made important additions to the Palace, and built the stupendous Hall, 270 feet long and 74 broad, and of which he is reported to have expressed his disapprobation that it had not been made longer, observing, "This Hall is not big enough by one half, and but a bed-chamber in comparison of what I mean to make." His sudden death, however, put a stop to his intentions.

In the time of Henry III. a portion being destroyed by fire, was restored by that monarch. It was again burnt in the reign of Edward I., together with St. Stephen's Chapel and the adjacent Abbey Church of St. Peter materially damaged; and restored in 1294. Again injured by fire in 1298, its restoration commenced in May 1330 (4 Edward III.), and the rolls containing the details of wages paid to the workmen are still preserved.

The works were not, however, completed for some years; but on the 6th of August, 1348, in the twenty-second year of the reign of Edward III., that King, by Royal Charter, recited, "That a spacious Chapel stood within the Palace of Westminster, in honour of St. Stephen, the proto-martyr, had been nobly begun by his progenitors, and completed at his own expense, which, to the honour of Almighty God, and especially of the Blessed Mary his Mother, and of the said Martyr, he ordained, constituted, and appointed to be collegiate, and that there should be established therein a Dean, twelve Secular Canons,

“ with the same number of Vicars, and other sufficient Ministers, to celebrate divine service for the King, his progenitors, and successors for ever; and endowed the said Dean, Canons, and College with his great house, situate in Lombard Street, within the City of London, with the patronage and advowsons of the Churches of Dewsbury and of Wakefield, in the County of York; which he granted “ in pure and perpetual alms towards their support. And also so much money out of his treasury as “ with the profits arising from the said house and churches, would amount to the yearly sum of £500, “ until he should otherwise provide for them with lands and other revenues of that yearly value.”

The foundation charter of St. George's College, at Windsor, bears date on the very same day with this of St. Stephen, Westminster.

King Edward subsequently endowed this Chapel with various other alms and rents; and, on the 1st of January, 1353, he, by charter dated at the Tower of London, gave to the said Dean and Canons a parcel of ground beneath his Palace, towards the north, extending in length between the walls of the said Chapel and the Recepta (or receipt chamber) of his Exchequer, and in breadth, from the walls of the Great Hall of Westminster to the Thames, whereon to build a cloister and other houses necessary for the said Chapel, and several other houses thereabouts; and free ingress and egress through his Great Hall all the day time. He also exempted them from payment of all taxes.

In Henry III.'s reign the circular arch and massive column, so much in repute amongst the Saxon architects, seem to have been wholly laid aside, and the pointed arch and slender pillar being substituted in their room, obtained such general approbation throughout the kingdom, that several of the strong and stately buildings which had been constructed in previous reigns were pulled down, and the edifices renovated in the new style. The Cathedral Church of Salisbury is entirely of this kind of architecture, which was adhered to more than any other to the reign of Henry VII.; and also much in use in the early period of Henry VIII., in whose reign the royal Palace of Westminster was for the third time almost entirely destroyed by fire.

After this time it was not again repaired as a royal abode; but the Court removed to Whitehall, where the sumptuous building erected by Cardinal Wolsey for an episcopal palace, was by him surrendered to the King, and became the regal residence; but that palace also was greatly damaged by fire in 1690, and ultimately destroyed by a similar catastrophe in 1697-8, except the Banqueting House, which yet remains—being now called Whitehall Chapel—a beautiful relic of that vast and magnificent edifice. Amongst the state apartments of the old Palace, there was none which had a more ancient reputation, and was more generally known than the “Painted Chamber,” which apartment, built by Edward the Confessor, who died therein, and which unquestionably had undergone some changes and alterations, still existed in the present century in its original construction, and was destroyed, all but the exterior walls, by the disastrous fire which, in 1834, consumed nearly every relic of the old Palace.

We have already alluded to historical references to the celebrated “Painted Chamber,” which not only decide the fact of its early existence, but point out the subjects of the paintings which decorated it, and gave rise to its name. Strong reasons, however, may be adduced for ascribing these paintings

to the time of Henry III., as in the twenty-first year of his reign there is a mandate for paying Odo the goldsmith, clerk of the works at Westminster, £4. 11s. for pictures, 'to be done in the King's chamber' there. This apartment had two floors, one of which was tessellated, and the other boarded, supported on vast joists of chestnut timber, which were propped up by middle walls erected to sustain them. Its length was eighty feet six inches, its width twenty-six feet, and its height from the upper floor thirty-one feet. The ceiling, which was curiously designed, was of Henry III.'s time, and embellished with gilded and painted tracery, including small wainscot pateræ, variously ornamented. Among the paintings on the walls, and which had been entirely forgotten until the removal of some old tapestry in 1800, were representations of the battles of the Maccabees; the Seven Brethren; St. John, habited as a pilgrim, presenting a ring to Edward the Confessor; the Canonization of King Edward, etc., interspersed with texts of scripture.

Formerly the walls of this chamber, to above half their height, were hung with some very curious old tapestry, chiefly representing the siege of Troy; but this was taken down in 1800. Previously to the conflagration of 1834, the Painted Chamber was used as the place of conference between the Lords and the Commons; but since that event it was conveniently fitted up by Sir Robert Smirke as the temporary *House of Lords*. In former days the opening of New Parliaments took place in this apartment; and here the warrant for the execution of Charles I. was signed by his judges.

The old House of Lords was originally the ancient Court of Requests, in which the Masters of the Court received the petitions made to the king from his subjects; for in 'the good old time of our ancestors' the monarch was personally accessible to his subjects, and sat in person on the King's Bench at Westminster.

We have already, in our reference to William the Norman, alluded to the fact of his holding solemn courts at his Palace thrice a year, at Easter, Whitsuntide, and Christmas; and then all the great nobility, civil and ecclesiastical, the chief persons of the kingdom, and all suitors, were in attendance. The Court of Common Pleas was especially within the King's Palace, which may account for the spaciousness of royal residences, for while the business of the kingdom came under consideration, hospitality prevailed.

Stow informs us that in the year 1236 (21st Henry III.), on the day of the circumcision of our Lord, the king's treasurer was commanded to cause six thousand poor people to be fed at Westminster for the state of the king, the queen, and the royal children. The weak and aged were to be placed in the Great Hall, and in the Lesser those who were more strong and in reasonable plight: in the chambers of the king and queen, the children were fed; and when the king was made acquainted with the charge he readily allowed it in the account.

King Henry I. is mentioned as the first sovereign of England who personally addressed his General Council, or Parliamentary Assembly, in a set speech. Thinking it incumbent on him to explain the harshness of his behaviour towards his eldest brother, Robert Duke of Normandy, and to reconcile his subjects to the heavy taxes he had laid on them, he called together a General Council of the Nation, and

being an eloquent orator, with great command of language, he spoke to them in a well devised harangue, which is noticed by Mathew Paris, and which had the desired effect upon his auditors, who assured the king of their readiness to sacrifice their lives and fortunes in his defence.

Where this Council was held is not previously set down, but it was in all probability at Westminster; as although London was the metropolitan city, yet Westminster was the metropolitan seat of Government, the principal palace of the king, and the Court of Judicature of the kingdom.

The vault under the Court, and which abutted on Cotton Garden, called 'Guy Vaux's cellar,' from the gunpowder and combustibles placed there by him and his confederates in 1604-5, is said to have been the original kitchen of Edward the Confessor's Palace.

To the time of Edward IV., the Parliaments were holden sometimes at one place and sometimes at another; but in that reign, and thence to the present time, they appear to have been holden regularly at Westminster; and Edward VI. appropriated the Chapel of St. Stephen's to the parliamentary purposes of the Commons, who had previously always assembled in the Chapter House of the Abbey of Westminster.

The late House of Lords where the Peers carried on the business of the Parliament, was not the whole of the Old Court of Requests, for part of the north end was formed into a lobby, by which the Commons passed from their own House into this chamber. The throne was new on the accession of His Majesty George IV. The room was handsome, but not so spacious as the House of Commons. In the front towards Abingdon-street it was decorated with pinnacles of very modern erection: the internal part was hung with some old tapestry, the gift of the States of Holland, much admired, and celebrated as representing the defeat of the Spanish Armada in the time of Queen Elizabeth. It was divided into compartments by frames of brown stained wood, each compartment containing a portion of this famous story. The heads which composed the border of these compartments, were portraits of the several gallant officers who commanded in the English fleet on that memorable occasion. All this, except the exterior walls, was destroyed by the fire of 1834. The Prince's Chamber, or Robing Room (also consumed in 1834), adjoined the south side of the old House of Lords. Its foundation appeared to have been of the Confessor's time; but the superstructure, from the style of its lancet windows, etc., was generally assigned to the reign of Henry III. It was from the vaults under this apartment, by those beneath the old House of Lords, that the Gunpowder Conspirators of 1604 obtained easy access to the cellars under the House of Lords, where they stored their combustibles.

We have already given the history of St. Stephen's Chapel, of which the ancient crypt alone remains, and forms a portion of the foundation of the New Palace. It was very substantially and beautifully constructed, being finally completed as far back as 1364. Prior to the suppression of this, with the other free chapels, by a statute of 1st Edward VI. (1547), the cloisters were rebuilt by Dr. John Chambers, physician to Henry VIII., who had been promoted to the Deanery in 1526, and was the last Dean who held that office. Stow relates, that these cloisters of "curious workmanship" were erected at the charge of 11,000 marks. The cloisters, first built about 1356, were on the south side of the Chapel,

where Cotton Garden stood, and which was occupied by the Speaker's house and garden, and the house and garden of J. H. Ley, Esq., Table Clerk of the House of Commons.

In the course of some alterations, previous to the fire of 1834, it was discovered, whilst digging in the Speaker's garden, which was situated between the east end of the House of Commons and the river, that the whole of this garden was a modern embankment; that the east end of the wall of that range of building, which had been formerly the Vicars' houses, was the extreme boundary wall towards the river; and that the water at one time came up closely to it. The wall ranged with the east end of St. Stephen's Chapel, and the east end of the Painted Chamber, and a foundation wall of connexion was discovered in Cotton Garden. It was also in a line with the stone wall enclosing New Palace Yard on the east, which stands on what was at one time the edge of the river, and extended up to the present Privy Gardens, or that spot of ground covered by Whitehall, as it was afterwards called. A similar continuation of it, situated also on the water's edge, may be traced southward, from the east extremity of the Painted Chamber to the spot where the King's slaughter-house stood, opposite the end of College Street.

On the 22nd of July, 1550, a charter was granted by Edward VI. to Sir Ralph Fane, Knight, bestowing on him the site and buildings of the dissolved College of St. Stephen, for his services at Musselburgh, in the expedition against the Scots, and for the ransom of the Earl of Huntley, whom he had taken prisoner, and presented to the King; reserving only the upper part of the Church, or Chapel, of the said College (above the vault, or Lower Chapel,) which the King had already given and assigned for the House of Parliament, and in which Parliaments were to be held. The premises were to be held by Sir Ralph in free soccage, as of the royal manor of East Greenwich.

It appears from a deed in the Augmentation Office, with a memorandum annexed, that the property thus granted was valued at £13. 6s. 8d. per annum, on the 10th April, 1552. It had then been re-granted to Sir John Gate (or Gates), K.G., and his heirs. In the reign of Elizabeth it reverted to the Crown, and the Queen appropriated the premises for the residence of the Auditor and Tellers of the Exchequer.

Near this Chapel, and probably on the south side, was the small Chapel of *St. Mary de la Pewe*,—‘Our Lady of the Pew;’ of which frequent mention is made in records relating to the Old Palace. In a record, dated 1443, it is styled “the oratory, called *Le Pewe*, belonging to the College or Chapel of St. Stephen.” At what time it was finally destroyed does not appear.

The House of Commons was formed within St. Stephen's Chapel, principally raised by a floor above the pavement, and having a roof considerably lower than the ancient one; but in what manner the Chapel was originally fitted up as the Commons' House of Parliament, at its first appropriation to the uses of the legislative assembly, does not appear; but at that period, and long afterwards, the business of the Commons was of a very limited nature, compared to its extent and complexity of late years.

On the great seal of the Commonwealth, in 1691, the walls are represented as hung with tapestry; but previous seals show them to have been plainly wainscoted. They remained tapestried

until Sir Christopher Wren repaired the House, and fitted it up with wainscoting, in the time of Queen Anne.

Mr. Speaker Onslow (1566) was said to have remembered tapestry hanging up, and that upon every New Parliament a fresh set used to be provided; on which occasion the housekeeper claimed the old ones as a perquisite of office. The hangings, therefore, could not lay claim to much antiquity.

Very few alterations were made from this time until the Union with Ireland, in 1800, when the number of Members increasing, the House was ordered to be enlarged. On examination of the original side walls between the piers, they were found to be three feet thick, and the requisite enlargement was effected by taking down the entire side walls, except the buttresses, and by erecting, on the same foundation, walls of one foot thick, which ranged with the external extremities of the walls, so as to give one seat in each of the recesses thus formed, by throwing back part of the walls. A gallery ran along the west end, and the north and south sides were supported by slender iron pillars, crowned with gilt Corinthian capitals: the whole house was lined with oak. The Speaker's Chair stood at some distance from the wall, towards the upper end of the apartment. It was slightly ornamented with gilding, having the King's Arms at the top.

Before the Speaker's Chair, at a small interval, was a table, at which the Clerks of the House sat when Parliament met. On the table the Speaker's mace was placed, unless the House was in Committee, when it was put under the table, and the Speaker then left the Chair. Between the table and the bar was an area, in which a temporary bar was placed when witnesses were examined. There were five rows of seats on each side of the House, and at both ends, upon which the Members sat. The seat on the floor, on the Speaker's right hand, was called the 'Treasury Bench,' on which the chief Members of the Administration took their places; and the opposite side was occupied by the leading Members of the opposition. The gallery on each side was appropriated also for Members, and the front gallery for strangers; the last seat being reserved for the reporters. The table is reported to have been the identical one on which the mace lay when Cromwell entered the House, and commanded "that bauble to be *taken away*."

The Chapel, as completed by Edward III., has always been represented of so much beauty, as to have made it a matter of great regret by antiquarians that it should have undergone any alteration, and been defaced to convert it into a House of Commons. When the inner walls were unmasked for the enlargement before alluded to, by removing the wainscot for that purpose, a discovery was made of many works of art which had adorned the old Chapel: the interior of the walls and roof were curiously wrought and decorated, with a profusion of gilding and painting. It appears to have been divided into compartments, of gothic shape, each having a border of gilt roses. At the east end, including perhaps a third of the length of the whole Chapel, which part was most probably enclosed for the altar, the entire walls and roof were covered with gilding and paintings, and presented, even in the mutilated state they then displayed during the alterations, a superb and unique remnant of the fine arts as they then existed.

Dr. Charles Gower, a physician belonging to Middlesex Hospital, communicated a knowledge of

this discovery to Mr. J. T. Smith, an able artist, who was so much struck with these specimens of ancient art, that he requested and obtained permission to copy some of them for the purpose of engraving, and afterwards published many prints of these paintings in his work on the "Antiquities of Westminster." Amongst the subjects depicted on the walls were the History of Jonah—the Martyrdom of the Apostles—the History from Joseph to Joshua—History of Daniel—Jeremiah—the Israelites—Tobit—Judith—Susanna—Bel and the Dragon—Samuel to Solomon—and the Miracles of our Saviour.

Others of the paintings represented angels, above five feet high, in a standing position, with wings of peacock's feathers, each holding before him a piece of drapery, having on it devices of doves, spread eagles, elephants and castles, griffins or dragons, and pelicans: others were scriptural subjects, with legends of the saints, and verses over. The gilding was remarkably solid, and highly burnished, and the colour of the paintings vivid, being, to all appearance, as fresh as when they were executed. One of the paintings is said to have possessed merit in the composition as well as colouring. The subject was "*the Adoration of the Shepherds*," in which the Virgin was not devoid of beauty and dignity, considering the little progress the fine arts had made in England at that early period.

The rolls of Edward III., which have been preserved, and give details of the purchase and price of materials, wages of persons employed, and a variety of other particulars, are of the utmost value to the history of the art of painting, sculpture, and architecture; and, amongst other facts, most decidedly prove that the paintings were executed in *oil*; and as they were done in 1350-2, they were anterior to the date usually ascribed to this important era in the annals of art, which has been assigned to 1410, and John Van Eyck, of Bruges, reputed and received as the inventor of that mode of painting. Moreover, there were *oil* paintings in this Chapel as early as the time of Edward I. (1272), as the rolls amply prove; and this would make the application of oil-colours to the painting of pictures 118 years before the time of John of Bruges, and deprive him of the originality assigned to him by Vasari and other writers.* Under the windows in this Chapel there were eighty paintings in compartments, many of them containing from ten to twelve figures, besides sixteen subjects at the east end, and upwards of one hundred figures of angels, knights, and youths, with several statues six feet high, sculptured in stone, and standing on brackets. Some of these paintings were exceedingly rich; others, less brilliant in execution, had been occasionally hidden by hangings, coats of arms,† and grotesque supporters mingled throughout amongst the excessive mass of embellishments. It was, as a complete structure, surpassed, in extent and magnificence, by no building of its time and country.

The west front of the Chapel was to be seen before the fire, and had a fine Gothic window. Beneath the House were passages or apartments, appropriated to various uses, which were apparently the original

* Those who take an interest in this subject, on which our limits will not allow us to expatiate, will find it amply and satisfactorily treated of in Smith's "Antiquities of Westminster."

† It was in the reign of Edward III. that the English nobility began to use quarterings in their arms, in imitation of their sovereign, who added the arms of France to those of England, on claiming the crown of the former kingdom. It was also in this reign that the Speaker of the House of Commons was first chosen, viz., 50th of Edward III., that honour devolving on Sir Thomas Hungerford.

foundation of the Chapel of St. Stephen; and the under Chapel, of curious construction, has survived the conflagration, and forms a portion of the present site, to which we shall hereafter refer, merely remarking in this place, that the crypt formed the roof of the Speaker's State Dining-Room, and the House of Commons was the upper part of the wing of the Speaker's residence, which was in a small court of the Old Palace, with a garden fronting the Thames, and his dining chair was directly under his official seat.

It may not be deemed amiss if we now enter into a brief history of the origin and progress of Parliaments in the two Houses, with a few details as to the business and the forms pursued in each of the Parliamentary Chambers.

The word 'Parliament' is of more modern origin than the existence of Legislative Assemblies in this country; and we know that the Saxons called their meetings (which more resembled Privy Councils of our day) *Witan-ge-mot*.* Parliament is obviously derived from the French, and *Parlement* was first applied to the general assemblies of the state in the reign of Louis VII. The first use of the word in this country, according to some authorities, occurs in the preamble to the statute of Westminster, 3rd Edward I., A.D. 1272: but Coke disputes this, and asserts, that the word 'Parliament' was used in the reign of Edward the Confessor. Be this as it may, there was nothing at all approaching to the representative system similar to that now in operation until "some years after the Conquest," according to Hume. We may fix the period as nearly as possible during the reign of Henry III., who assembled his Parliament whenever he wanted an excuse to extract money from the Londoners. We may, indeed, go higher for the earliest form of Parliament, as the principles of the existing Parliamentary Constitution were certainly existing as early as the reign of King John; for he, in the Great Charter, promises to summon all the archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, and great barons, personally, and all other tenants in chief under the Crown, by the sheriffs and bailiffs, to meet at a certain place, with forty days' notice, to assess aids and scutages, when necessary.

It is also certain that the representative system for the Commons was in actual operation in the reign of Henry III.; for there still remain writs of the date 1266, to summon knights, citizens, and burgesses, to Parliament. There are some writers who believe Parliaments were formally summoned as early as the time of Henry I.†

* The constitution of this great council of the Heptarchy—one of the earliest of which was assembled by Ina, King of the West Saxons, A. D. 690-1—has been much disputed. It was not a representative body, but consisted mainly of the spiritual and temporal thanes who held immediately of the crown, and who could command the services of military vassals. In fact, the Witan was the hereditary Council of the Crown, and resembled the House of Lords rather than the Commons.

† There was a 'Parliament' held 1189 at Westminster in the first year of the reign of Richard I. This was an assembly of the "bishops, earls, and barons," convened by that monarch for the purpose of considering the propriety of acceding to an invitation of the King of France, who sent an ambassador to notify, that he and his nobles had determined to embark in the enterprise of delivering the Holy Land from the hands of the Saracens, and inviting Richard and his Peers to concur in this sacred undertaking. The assembled nobles very readily agreed to the proposal: they assumed the cross, took the customary oaths of the crusaders on the spot, and soon after left England to fulfil their vows.

Henry III. found the means of making Parliaments useful to his purposes ; and in 1253 he called a Parliament together, the majority consisting most probably of persons devoted to him by interest, or serving him from fear ; and then acknowledging his irregularities, and promising faithfully to observe the Charter of King John, he thus prevailed on the clergy to grant him one-tenth of their revenue for three years, and on the barons to pay three marks for every knight's fee held immediately of the crown.

In January 1254, whilst the king was prosecuting the war in Guienne, a Parliament was summoned at Westminster by the queen's authority : but already the 'opposition' was formed, and although twice assembled, the barons steadily refused to grant the aid required, and the meeting was dissolved. A similar refusal was given to Henry himself at another Parliament which met in the Palace at the feast of Saint Edward in 1255, and at which all the great men of the kingdom were present on this occasion. The king is recorded to have 'prolonged the time of the session day after day for the space of a month ;' yet all his endeavours were ineffectual, and he could not prevail on the barons to agree to his wishes.

The faithless conduct of the king, the tool of his favourites, and the despoiler of his people, created so powerful a feeling against him, that matters came to a crisis ; and the sturdy barons, emboldened by their course against King John, when summoned to Westminster in 1258, appeared there in complete armour. On the entrance of the king they laid aside their offensive weapons ; but Henry, alarmed at so warlike an aspect, exclaimed, "am I then a prisoner?" "No," replied Roger de Bigod (Earl of Norfolk and Earl Marshal), "but as you, sire, by your partiality for foreigners, and your own prodigality, have 'involved the realm in misery, we demand that the authority of the state be delegated to commissioners, 'who shall have power to correct abuses, and enact salutary laws.'"

A long and fierce altercation ensued ; but Henry was forced into submission, and the meeting was then adjourned to Oxford. On the day appointed, June 11, 1258, the Parliament assembled in that city, when the entire government of the kingdom was vested in a council of twenty-four barons and prelates, who, aided by *twelve representatives* of the people or commonalty, were entrusted with the management of the proposed reformations. Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester (who had married the king's sister), was the principal leader of the opposing powers.

Henry again violated every condition of the assembly at Oxford. De Montfort took the field against the royal forces, and a battle ensued at Lewes on the 14th May, 1264, when a treaty was subsequently signed on the field, called the "*mise of Lewes*," when it was agreed to refer all matters in dispute to a Parliament, to be summoned in the following month at London. In this battle Henry, the King of the Romans (the king's brother Richard), and Edward the king's son, afterwards Edward I., were made prisoners, and five thousand men were said to have been slain.

Simon de Montfort then called a Parliament at Winchester in the king's name ; and this, Dr. Brady contends, is the first in which two knights for each county, two citizens for each city, and two burgesses for each borough, were summoned ; and thus the original House of Commons was constituted in 1264.

Again on the 22nd January, 1265, another Parliament was convened to consider on the release of Prince Edward, to which were summoned two knights for each county, and two burgesses for each

borough, with *four* citizens for the city of London (no doubt in return for the support they had rendered to the barons), and they resolved on releasing the prince, whilst the king was still under the guard of Simon of Leieester. Soon after there was a division amongst the barons themselves, and Prince Edward offering battle to de Montfort, the baron was slain at Evesham, having been undoubtedly the founder of our representative system.

The king thus free, and the queen having returned to England with the Pope's Legate, the disaffected barons were excommunicated. Parliaments were then held at Southampton, Kenilworth, London, Marlborough, and elsewhere. Henry died in 1272.*

We may notice that at this period there was an obstinate and one of the earliest disputes between the civil and ecclesiastical courts on the subject of bastardy. The common law had deemed all men bastards who were born before wedlock: by the canon law they were held legitimate by the after-marriage. At a Parliament assembled at Merton the prelates insisted that the municipal law should be made conformable to the canon law; but the sturdy barons returned the celebrated reply, '*Nolumus leges Angliæ mutari*'—“We will not change the laws of England.” This was, perhaps, the first decided check to clerical superiority.

According to Selden, in the 47th of this reign, one hundred and fifty temporal and fifty spiritual barons were summoned to perform the service due by their tenures. In the 35th of the subsequent reign, eighty-six temporal barons, twenty bishops, and forty-eight abbots, were summoned to a Parliament convened at Carlisle.

Writs in the reign of Edward I., as well as in that of his father, were issued to boroughs to return Members to Parliament. In the preamble to the writ Edward says, “It is a most equitable rule that ‘what concerns all should be approved by all; and common dangers repelled by united efforts.’” The deputies of boroughs, however, had as yet little or no influence in the state. They had no deliberative capacity, nor hardly a negative, but simply the privilege of giving their consent to such grants as the king might demand. Their charges were borne by the boroughs which sent them, and it was then considered a disadvantage to be summoned to return deputies, who gave sureties for their attendance before the King and Parliament. They sat apart from the barons and knights, who disdained to mix with such mean personages; and when the burgesses had given their consent to the new taxes they returned home, though the ‘Parliament’ still continued to sit and discuss the national business. The sheriffs used the freedom of omitting such boroughs as they conceived did not contain persons of sufficient wealth or ability to

* It is curious to see the Taxes levied in this reign of turbulence and bad faith. In 1224, two shillings were granted on every plough land, and one-fifteenth on all moveables, for the confirmation of Magna Charta. In 1226 a fifteenth of the clergy: five thousand marks levied on the citizens of London. 1230, The bishops and clergy paid large sums. The Jews paid a third of their treasure and effects. 1231, A scutage of three marks on every knight's fee. 1232, A fortieth of all moveables. 1235, Two marks on every plough land, and a thirtieth of all moveables. 1237, a thirtieth of all moveables granted to the king. 1242, Three marks on every knight's fee. 1244, Twenty shillings on every knight's fee for the marriage of his daughter. A tenth of all the ecclesiastical revenues for three years, and the nobility and knights three marks on every knight's fee, for relief of the Holy Land in confirmation of Magna Charta. 51 H. 3rd, Three-tenths of all church revenues granted by the Pope. 54 H. 3rd, A twentieth part granted to the king by the laity.

qualify them for the function of representatives, and the boroughs returned thanks for this omission, considering it as an indulgence. This power of the sheriffs continued till the reign of Richard II.

We may here advert to some important changes in the constitution of the peerage. From the Norman invasion to the reign of the Edwards, the assembly which, in more modern times, has been called the House of Lords, was composed of barons and prelates, who sat in right of territorial possession, holden from the crown, and were more specifically designated by the first Great Charter, as 'the greater barons.' To these barons by tenure were afterwards added the barons by writ, 'notable men,' who were summoned at the pleasure of the king, to aid and advise him in Parliament. The writs were at first never renewed, or irregularly continued. While the power of arbitrarily issuing them lasted, the crown by summoning, or not, particular individuals, had a direct power over the constitution of the great council of the nation. However, in the 16th century it was settled, that when a man was summoned in Parliament, and had taken his seat, he and his heirs were ennobled. From that time it became hazardous to the crown to multiply peerages; for though the first possessors should be subservient, their descendants might be refractory.

From the 22nd of the reign of Edward I. (1294), we have an uninterrupted series of Parliaments down to the present time; and by a law made August 1, 1296, it was enacted, *that "no tax should be levied without the consent of the knights, citizens, and burgesses in Parliament."*

Edward II.'s reign was marked by only two, but those very remarkable, constitutional decrees. In a fresh renewal of the Charter, the following important provision was added. "For as much as many people be aggrieved by the king's ministers against right, in respect to which grievance no one can recover without a common Parliament, we do order that the king shall hold a Parliament *once* a year, *or twice if need be;*" and the other was, that "the king should not leave the kingdom, nor levy war, without the consent of the baronage in Parliament."

By the writ *de expensis*, it appears that the knights of the shire were usually paid four shillings per diem each for attendance, in addition to their expenses for coming and returning; sometimes three shillings and fourpence, and in one instance half-a-crown only.

The latter part of the reign of Edward III. may be mentioned as the period since which the sittings of the great national council have ceased to be moveable, and been held, almost exclusively, at Westminster. From the termination of that reign, now four hundred and sixty-four years, not more than fourteen Parliaments have been holden out of Westminster, whilst, in the two preceding reigns alone, more than an equal number were held in other places.

The Parliament of 21st January, 1377, was held at Westminster, and opened in presence of Prince Richard of Bourdeaux, eldest surviving son of the Black Prince, who had been created Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester, and now presided as *locum tenens* for the king under a royal commission. This appears to have been the first Parliament in which the existence of a Speaker of the Commons House is alluded to in authentic records. A poll tax of two pence upon every person, male or female, above fourteen years of age was, by this Parliament, ordered to be levied on the people.

The opinion that for some long time previous the two Estates sat and voted together, has been a

matter of much discussion, and never decided. The Chancellor used to unfold to them in common the matters for consultation, and then, in all probability, they adjourned to separate places to deliberate and frame their measures. The year assigned for their actual separation is 1339, when the Commons refused to grant the same aid as the Lords without instructions from their constituents: but it is generally agreed that they deliberated separately long before this period.

Almost every Parliament from the 28th of Edward III. to the end of his reign (as appears from the original rolls) was opened in the *Painted Chamber*; but the general place of assembly for the peers and great men was the *White Chamber*. The Commons occasionally held their sittings in the Painted Chamber; but in the last two Parliaments of this reign it is expressly stated, that they were directed to withdraw to their *ancient place*, the *Chapter House* of Westminster. The consideration of petitions (a right very early acknowledged) was usually referred to committees of about twenty persons, more or less composed of the chief officers of the crown, viz., the Chancellor, Treasurer, Seneschal, and Chamberlain, with certain peers, spiritual and temporal, and a few knights: those for English petitions meeting in the Chamberlain's room near the Painted Chamber, and those for foreign ones assembling in *Marcolf's Chamber*, near to the river.

During the reign of Edward III., nearly fifty Parliaments were held at Westminster.*

In the language of this period the law was said to emanate from the will of the king, or the petition of the subject. But it was a principle universally recognised, that no one estate could, without its own consent, be bound by any law granted at the prayer of another. This was the chief weapon with which the Commons fought all their battles. In 1346 Edward III., by proclamation, compelled every owner of land to furnish horsemen and archers in proportion to his estate; and required, for the same purpose, a certain sum of money from every city and borough. The Commons petitioned against this ordinance, on the ground that it had been issued without their consent (Lingard's His. V. iv., p. 167.) Edward replied, that it was a measure of necessity; but the Commons repeated their objection, and were so urgent in their remonstrance, that the king promised the ordinance should not form a precedent for future exactions.

Several constitutional acts of importance were passed at this period, when the Commons began to acquire some strength in Parliament. Amongst the most popular was the 29th of the king, which limited the cases of high treason, before vague and uncertain, to three principal heads,—viz. conspiring the death of the king, levying war against him, and adhering to his enemies; and should any other cases arise, the judges were prohibited inflicting the penalty of treason, without first applying to Parliament.

Personal and proprietary security are guaranteed by another act (28 Ed. III., c. 3), which enacts,

* It is recorded that in that held on the Monday after the feast of St. Hilary (Jan. 13), 1349, among the summonses to this Parliament there is a writ 'de admittendo fide dignos ad colloquium,' and among the earls and barons returned are—Marie Countesse de Norfolk, Alianor Countesse de Ormond, Philippa Countesse de March, Agnes Countesse de Pembrook, and Katherine Countesse de Atholl; and, in the preceding year, 'four Abbesses' had been summoned to the Parliament at Westminster. It does not appear, however, that any ladies ever took their seats in Parliament by virtue of these summonses, although numerous instances are on record of knights and esquires having sat in the House of Lords in *right of their wives*.

“ that no man, of what state or condition soever, shall be put out of land or tenement, nor taken, nor imprisoned, nor disinherited, nor put to death, without being brought to answer by due process of law.”

From this time until the accession of Henry VII., many laws were passed, which proved the growing power of Parliament, and especially of the Commons. In the reign of Henry VI. a most important act passed relating to the election of knights of the shire. After the destruction of the feudal system every householder paying scot and lot was admitted to give his vote at elections. This was confirmed by the 7th of Henry IV., c. 15; but in the 9th and 10th of this reign the elective franchise was limited to such as possessed forty shillings a year in land, free from all burden, within the county. This sum was equivalent to twenty pounds of our present money. The reason for disfranchising so large a body of electors (who, it will be remembered, subsequently acquired the right of voting in boroughs,) is thus stated in the preamble of the enactment, which we quote for its curiosity, as well as for its relevancy to our object in tracing Parliaments from their earliest origin to their present maturity.

“ Whereas (so runs the bill) the elections of knights have of late in many counties of England been made by outrages and excessive numbers of people, many of them of small substance and value, yet pretending to a right equal to the best knights and esquires, whereby manslaughter, riots, batteries, and divisions among the gentlemen and other people of the same county, shall very likely rise and be, unless due remedy be provided in this behalf.”

From the expression “ small substance and value,” we may infer that the possession of property to some amount was necessary under the law of Henry IV. We may further presume, that the election of a Member of Parliament had now become a matter of greater importance and interest, and that this body was beginning to acquire considerable influence. Indeed at the commencement of this reign the Lords and Commons had not only by their own authority, contrary to the will of Henry V., altered the name, but the constitution, of the regency which that prince had appointed.

In the reign of Henry VII. the race of villains and serfs was nearly extinct, and wages were quadruple the amount they had been during the preceding century. The civil wars of the Roses having swept away crowds of annuitants and creditors that formerly burdened the exchequer, Henry was enabled to reign with very little assistance from Parliament. During the last seven years of his reign he assembled but one, A.D. 1504. In this reign were various important changes in the laws and the general constitution of society. The most striking enactment was that by which the nobility and gentry acquired the right of breaking the ancient entails, and alienating their estates. By means of this law the great estates of the barons were gradually dismembered, and the property, and consequent influence, of the Commons increased.

In this reign the Court of the Star-Chamber was instituted. It was at first created to put down the disorders of ‘ maintenance,’ that is, associations of individuals under a chief, whose livery they wore, and to whom they bound themselves by oath to maintain all his private quarrels.

The accession of Henry VIII. was an era of great events; but it was the religious rather than the political changes that are of importance. Henry’s arbitrary and imperious disposition engrossed the

whole power of the state, and the Parliament was little better than a nullity, or the instrument of regal tyranny. So entire was the obliteration of constitutional forms under this haughty Tudor, that by one statute he declared the king's proclamation to be equal to the laws.

One, and that the main cause, of the despotic rule of the Tudor dynasty, may be found in the fact of the altered balance of the constitution. The House of Peers no longer consisted of those powerful lords and prelates who, in former periods, had so often and so successfully resisted the encroachments of the sovereign. So many of the nobility had been killed, executed, and attainted, during the devastating wars of the Houses of York and Lancaster, that only twenty-seven Peers were summoned to the first Parliament of Henry VII., and but thirty-six to that of Henry VIII. Then this rapacious and sensual king laid his hands on the monasteries, suppressing in all six hundred and forty-five: of these twenty-eight had abbots, who sat in Parliament; but when the Parliament of 15th April, 1539, was summoned, only twenty spiritual peers assembled.

The reigns of Edward VI. and Mary did not add much to the power of Parliament; and that of Elizabeth was little more than a display of the will of the sovereign: but its tranquillity was greatly in favour of the subsequent growth of power amongst the people. Yet when we consider the judicial and legislative machinery of the state, we shall find how absolute the Government really was at this period.

First was the Court of the Star Chamber,* whose members held their places during the pleasure of



(EXTERIOR OF THE OLD STAR CHAMBER.)

the crown, and might fine, imprison, and punish corporally by whipping, branding, slitting the nostrils and ears. The sovereign if present was sole judge, and the jurisdiction of the court extended to all sorts of offences, contempts, and disorders, that lay out of the reach of common law. The Court of High Commission was still more arbitrary; and there were other tribunals, civil and military, where the

* Stow says, "It derived its name from the roof, which was decked with the likeness of stars gilt; or from an old English word *steoran*, which 'signifieth to steer, as doth a pilot a ship.' Others derive the name from *starra*, or Jewish covenants, which were, by order of Richard I., deposited there in chests, under three locks. No *starr* was allowed to be valid except found in those repositories: here they remained until the banishment of the Jews by Edward I."

justice that was done was according to the prejudices of the judge, and not the demerits of the prisoner. The great event of this reign, as concerned the people, was the institution of the Poor Laws, which compelled the idle to work, and took away all pretences for vagrancy, laying the foundation for that municipal order and industrial prosperity which has subsequently distinguished England from among the nations of Europe.

James VI., on being proclaimed king 24th March, 1603 (the day of Queen Elizabeth's decease), in right to the crown, was afterwards recognised by the Parliament which met at Westminster on the 19th March, 1604.

In 1605 the Parliament House was connected with one of the most extraordinary events in English History—the Gunpowder Plot. In 1620 the third Parliament of this reign met, when the Lord Chancellor Bacon was convicted of bribery, fined £40,000., and imprisoned during the king's pleasure. In this Parliament began the first of the divisions, called Town and Country parties, or a distinct opposition. In November, in the same year, they again assembled, and insisted on their privileges. James who, in a letter to the Speaker, had complained of the “fiery and popular spirit” in the Commons, sent for the Journals of the House, and tore out the leaf containing their protestation.

The reign of Charles I. was one contest between the Parliament and the royal prerogative; and it was at this period that the House of Commons acquired an ascendancy which it long maintained: but which became again a nullity in the hands of Cromwell, whose summary dismissal of it on the 20th April, 1653, is an event of no small importance in our annals.*



CROMWELL DISSOLVING THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

* Information having been brought to Cromwell that the Commons were hurrying a bill through its several stages for their immediate dissolution, for which the army had petitioned, because of the unpopularity of many of its members, and also its unprecedented duration—Cromwell took a file of musqueteers, and

After his forcible expulsion of the Long Parliament, Cromwell thought it expedient, if not necessary, to observe the forms of a free government, and accordingly sent summonses for the attendance at Whitehall to one hundred and thirty-nine Representatives for England, six for Wales, six for Ireland, and five for Scotland, and into their hands he affected to deposit the entire control of the kingdoms. According to the terms on which they were summoned, or he was pleased to dictate, they were to exercise their powers during fifteen months, and then retire after nominating their successors. This (in contradistinction to the Long Parliament) was called the Little or Praise-God-Barebones Parliament, after one of its Members.

Dr. Lingard in his history contends, that this Parliament has been much and unfairly depreciated. All its Members were respectable, and if not distinguished by vast wealth, or ancient lineage, yet were men of independent fortunes. During the convulsions of their times, when all society was shaken to its centre, and men had begun to think and act for themselves, many measures were suggested by this much calumniated Parliament, which have, in the subsequent course of time, passed into law; and if the Barebones Parliament, in its brief career, was not enabled to carry many measures, it at least originated several that have since become the law of the land, and are considered as highly important to the national benefit. But so sweeping did these measures appear to lawyers—for they proposed the Court of Chancery, and to the clergy, for they mooted the question of abolition of tithes and advowsons—that Oliver, finding the security of his dictatorship more identified with the partisans of abuses than those of reform, and that his Parliament was becoming too independent for his views, contrived to get a motion made in the House on the 12th Dec., 1653, that the “sitting of this Parliament was no longer “for the good of the Commonwealth;” and Cromwell was declared “Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland.”

The reign of Charles II. has been characterized as one signalized by good laws, but by bad government. The Habeas Corpus Act was a valuable addition to personal security. It was decided that the House of Lords has no power to originate a Bill of Supply; and the Lords acquired the important privilege of first recording their dissent on the Journals of the House, and afterwards of inserting the grounds of it.

From this period down to our own time Parliament has acquired fresh constitutional power, and succeeding monarchs have, since the unfortunate reign and misguided policy of James II., made those gradual concessions of privilege, and effused those ameliorations into the condition of the people, which have brought us down to the nicely balanced position of the British Constitution, which we at this moment

hastening down to the House, commanded the Speaker to leave the Chair, saying, that they had sat long enough, and exclaiming, “You are no longer a Parliament; “ I say you are no longer a Parliament.” He told Sir Harry Vane he was a juggler, adding, “The Lord deliver me from Sir Harry Vane.”—Harvey, Martin, and Sir Peter Wentworth, that they were reprobates, Chaloner that he was a drunkard, and Allen, the goldsmith, that he cheated the public; then desiring ‘that bauble’ to be removed, Harrison (first butcher and afterwards general) pushed the Speaker from his Chair, and clearing the House of its Members, Cromwell locked the door, and put the key in his pocket; and thus was dissolved by him, who had been its champion and assailant, the celebrated Long Parliament, after a duration of Twelve Years, during which it had alternately defended and infringed upon the liberties of the people.

enjoy, and of which it is the honest pride of every Englishman to be a supporter, until at last political differences seem almost to cease, and social questions now mainly occupy the attention of the Legislature.



HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT. TEMP. CHARLES II.

The writer of a very instructive essay, published in 1716, under the title of ‘An Enquiry into the Original Constitution of Parliaments in England and Scotland,’ says, that “for many ages all laws were nothing else but the kings’ answers to the petitions presented to him and his council, as is apparent by many old statutes and the confession of Sir Edward Coke.” The fact seems to be, that the legislative power rested essentially in the sovereign, who did not consult his great council on all public measures, but only assembled them occasionally to obtain their concurrence when the measure in contemplation was such as could not easily be carried into effect but through their agency, or with their consent.

Without going back to the times of Saxon rule in this country, it should be recollected, that at least after the Conquest, the territory was chiefly in the hands of military tenants, holding immediately of the crown estates of various extent. Some possessed immense tracts, having many subordinate holders; while others held estates inferior to those, which were in the hands of the vassals of the great proprietors: but the holding directly from the crown constituted an honour and distinction which entitled the person to a voice in the great council. When “Domesday Book” was compiled, there were about seven hundred such persons; but although all were equally, by virtue of their tenures, entitled to be consulted in the business of the nation, it appears that only the person holding a barony—that is, the more wealthy and powerful of those military tenants—exercised the right. The rest were excused—and were glad to be excused—on the score that their means were inadequate to enable them to incur the serious expense of meeting the king becomingly in the great council. The same right was possessed by the heads of the church, that is, not only the bishops, but certain abbots and priors, who claimed, as heads of extensive

monastic establishments, rights and privileges separate from, and independent of, the bishops, by whom therefore their interests could not be represented.

This was the original House of Lords—and not only the House of Lords, but the Parliament itself; for there was then no other House. The people were of no account in those days; and if they were at all thought of, their interests were supposed to be sufficiently represented by the barons, who stood in the relation of petty sovereigns to the knights and gentlemen holding estates of them, while the tradesmen and inhabitants of towns occupied a position of dependence on the same barons, which was little less than servile.

But it is desirable here to refer to the facts, that the first representatives of the people were peers, twelve in number; and when afterwards men of inferior rank were admitted, their tone was most subdued and humble: they declined to interfere in great questions of state, and, on several occasions, could bring their deliberations to no other conclusion than that they would advise the king to abide by the counsel of the lords. Even after the Commons began to be consulted, they were only occasionally summoned, that is, only when the question was of peculiar interest to the communities they represented; and from the great annoyance they expressed when they were required to declare their opinions on general subjects of state, or questions of peace and war, it seems likely that, even when summoned regularly to the Parliament, they only sat and voted with Peers on particular questions.

It is amusing and instructive to contrast this position with that to which the Commons had attained even in Elizabeth's reign, when they ventured to engage with the Lords in controversies about forms. "They complained that the Lords failed in civility to them by receiving their messages sitting with their hats on, and that the keeper returned an answer in the same negligent posture; but the Upper House proved, to their full satisfaction, that they were not entitled by custom and the usage of Parliament to any more respect. Some amendments were made by the Lords in a bill sent up by the Commons; and these amendments were written on parchment, and returned with the bill to the Commons. The Lower House took umbrage at the novelty; they pretended that these amendments ought to have been written on paper, not on parchment; and they complained of this innovation to the Peers. The Peers replied, that they expected not such a frivolous objection from the gravity of the House; and that it was not material whether the amendments were written on parchment or paper, or whether the paper were white, black, or brown. The Commons were offended at this reply, which seemed to contain a mockery of them; and they complained of it, though without obtaining any satisfaction."—(Hume, chap. 42.)

In former days Parliaments were seldom held twice consecutively in the same town. "The constitution of King, Lords, and Commons," says a modern writer, "was accustomed to scamper as fast as the state of the roads would permit, all over the kingdom, from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Land's End. Within one year it would hold its Parliamentary sittings at Carlisle and Westminster; in the following year at Exeter and Norwich, or at Lincoln and Worcester. Not only were the early Parliaments held in different towns, but they frequently moved from place to place daily during the session. The Parliament at Lincoln on the 9th of Edward II. was held on the 12th of February in

" the Hall of the Dean; on the 13th, in the Chapter House; and on the 14th, in the Convent of the " Carmelite Friars."

The powers and privileges of the Lords, as a branch of the legislature at the present time, and the forms observed in their assemblies, are, upon the whole, similar to those of the Commons, to which we shall presently refer. As an integral part of the legislature of the empire, the consent of a majority of the Peers is necessary to give effect to any law; but they have a privilege, not possessed by the Commons, of voting by proxy, without personal attendance. The Peers, in each several rank, take place according to the date of creation; and in voting, those of the lowest rank first declare their opinion in the words "content" or "not content." On state occasions, the Peers seat themselves in the House according to their rank; but in general no particular order is observed, except that of the "ministerial" or "opposition" side of the House. The Peers bow towards the throne on entering the House, which would seem to imply, that the Sovereign is always supposed to be present, who, however, rarely attends, except at the opening or the prorogation or dissolution of a Parliament. On such occasions, after the king or queen is seated on the throne, the Lords sit down, but without being covered. The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod is then sent by the Sovereign to command the attendance of the Commons, who, on their arrival, stand at the bar to hear the speech, the substance of which is addressed generally to both estates, in the words "My Lords and Gentlemen;" but towards the middle, there is always a paragraph relating to finance, specially addressed to the "Gentlemen of the House of Commons." This is because no money bill, or a bill imposing a tax, can originate in the House of Lords; and when such a bill is sent up from the Commons, the Peers must either agree to it, or reject it altogether, for the least alteration is considered fatal to it. In such cases it is the usual practice for the Commons to introduce a new bill, in which the amendments suggested by the Peers are incorporated.

Besides its legislative, the House of Lords has a judicial character. It is a court of appeal from the judgments of all other courts; and its decision is final. It is also the supreme court of criminal jurisprudence; in which character it has cognizance of treason and other high crimes committed by Peers and others; and also tries persons impeached by the House of Commons. The Peers acquit or condemn without taking any oath, but simply declare, upon their honour, that the accused is "guilty," or "not guilty."

After the separation of the Peers from the Commons in Parliament, the former continued to sit in Westminster Hall. Stowe mentions no definite period when they removed to the apartment they subsequently occupied. He only says, "and now, of a long time, the place of the sitting of Parliament "remains in the said ancient palace: the Lords in a fair room, and the Commons in that which was "formerly St. Stephen's Chapel." This "fair room" was the old House of Lords, which was situated near Westminster Hall. This apartment seems, in its interior arrangements, very much to have resembled that subsequently prepared for the reception of the Peers, the principal difference consisting in the greater size of the latter, the old House being an oblong apartment, of scarcely half of its dimensions.

We have already had occasion to mention that the late House of Lords was formed out of what had

formerly been the Court of Requests. It is supposed that originally, and before the erection of Westminster Hall, this apartment was the great hall of the palace. In the time of Richard II. it is found described by the name of Whitehall, as it is also in 1429: for John of Gaunt is recorded to have sat as seneschal in the “Whitehall of the King’s Palae,” near the King’s Chapel (which cannot agree with



HOUSE OF LORDS, TEMP. GEORGE II.

any room so well as this), for the purpose of determining claims previous to the coronation of Richard II.; and in 1429, on the day of the coronation of Henry IV., the Prince of Portugal’s son was knighted in “the Whitchall” at Westminster. In 1193, the then king is represented as sitting at dinner at West-

minster, in that Hall of his which was called the Little Hall—probably this; and the denomination was apparently given to it to distinguish it from the present Westminster Hall. Sir Edward Coke speaks of the apartment as the Court of Requests, or the Whitehall; thus shewing the identity of the place denoted by these means.

According to Stowe, the Court of Requests was instituted in the reign of Henry VII.; but the date of its abolition is not precisely indicated. We shall quote the account given by the writer we have named. “At the upper end of the Great Hall by the King’s Bench is a going up to a great chamber called the Whitehall, wherein is now kept the court of wards and liveries.*** And adjoining thereunto is the Court of Requests. Both these are now also dissolved. A few words concerning this last named court. In this court all suits made to the King or Queen, by way of petition, were heard and ended. This was called the ‘Poor Man’s Court,’ because there he could have right without paying any money. And it was also called the ‘Court of Conscience.’ The judges of this court were called the ‘Masters of Requests;’ one for the common laws, and the other for the civil laws; and I find that it was a court of equity, after the nature of the chancery, but inferior to it.** The chief judge was commonly the Lord Privy Seal; and the Court-Bishops and Chaplains, and other great courtiers, were the judges and masters.”*

The House of Lords was the scene of many incidents of great importance. Amongst others, in the last year but one of Richard II.’s reign, the Duke of Hereford appeared in Parliament, and accused the Duke of Norfolk of having spoken to him, *in private conversation*, slanderously and treasonably of the king and his intentions. Norfolk denied the charge, gave Hereford the lie, and offered to prove his innocence by single combat with the accuser. The Parliament, thinking it right to take cognizance of this transaction, but not caring to prolong its session for the purpose, delegated its authority to a committee. With the concurrence of the king, and apparently of this committee, every preparation was made for a grand duel between the parties, in the presence of the chief authorities of the kingdom: but at the last moment, when the combatants were already front to front, the king, with the advice and authority of the commissioners, interposed to prevent the effusion of blood; and, to shew his impartiality, sentenced the antagonist Peers to banishment, from which Hereford soon returned to pluck the crown from the head of his weak and misguided cousin.

In the early part of the year 1478, King Edward IV. appeared in the House of Lords to plead his own cause against his brother, the easy Duke of Clarence, against whom no charge was brought, but that of having used certain free expressions, which, if true, seem to prove nothing more than his careless and incautious disposition. Although the truth of the charge was proved by no adequate evidence, the duke was declared guilty by the Peers, and the Commons petitioned for his execution, and passed a bill of attainder against him. The king favoured his brother with the choice of the manner in which he should die; and, in pursuance of his choice, he was drowned in a butt of malmsey in the Tower. Hume says well in reference to the parliamentary spirit of that period. “The measures of the Parliament during that age furnish us with examples of a strange mixture of freedom and servility; they scrupled to

“ grant, and sometimes refused, to the king the smallest supplies, the most necessary to the support of the government, even the most necessary for the maintenance of wars, for which the nation, as well as the Parliament itself, expressed great fondness. But they scrupled not to concur in the most flagrant act of injustice or tyranny, which fell on any individual, however distinguished by birth or merit.”

The same historian remarks, that this spirit lasted more than a century longer. Among other proofs of this, their treatment of Wolsey may be mentioned. No sooner had the capricious Henry VIII. withdrawn his favour from that able but ambitious minister, than the House of Lords came forward with a charge of forty-four articles against him, and petitioned for his punishment and removal from *all* authority. Thomas Cromwell, then a member of the House of Commons, but formerly a servant of the cardinal, and “among the faithless faithful only found,” stood up in the Lower House to defend his benefactor. This Cromwell we find, a few years after, sitting in the Upper House as Earl of Essex, Knight of the Garter, Vicar-general, Lord Privy Seal, Lord Chamberlain, and Master of the Wards, and was declared by his Peers in that House, among other flatteries, to be “worthy, by his desert, of being vicar-general of the universe.” A few days after, this so worthy man was sentenced, in the same House, to death, without trial, or examination of any evidence against him.

The Parliaments in those days do not appear to have wasted much time in debate. Except when the Sovereign wanted a grant of money, they rarely hesitated to comply at once with the wishes of the court. Hence, although during the long reign of Henry VIII. there were ten Parliaments, which held twenty-three sessions, the time which they sat did not altogether exceed three years and a half.

In 1549, a bill of attainder was brought into the House of Lords against the protector Somerset’s ambitious brother, Seymour. He had demanded a fair and open trial; but none of all his friends in the House stood up to support his appeal, though many rose to say what they knew against him. Three years after, Somerset himself, whose ruin involved that of many of his friends, was tried by the Peers, who acquitted him of treason; but, to the great regret of the people, sentenced him to death on the charge of intending a felonious assault on the Privy Council.

On the opening of the first Parliament of Queen Mary, the court directed mass to be celebrated before both Houses, with all the ancient rites and ceremonies which had been abolished by Act of Parliament. Taylor, Bishop of Lincoln, having refused to kneel when the host was elevated, met with very severe treatment, and was violently thrust out of the House. The Parliamentary history of the following year was remarkable for the steady resistance of both Houses of Parliament to the desire of the Queen to be invested with the power of appointing her successor, with the almost avowed intention of nominating her husband, the King of Spain, Philip of gloomy memory.

We have already mentioned a little contest about forms which took place between the Lords and Commons in the reign of Elizabeth; and as we are now rather mentioning historical recollections than legislative measures, we may advert to the trials of the Earls of Essex and Southampton by the Peers as one of the most interesting local events of that reign. The trial was a fair one for the times, and is

rendered the more remarkable to us by the circumstance that Bacon, who had no official duty to perform, and had lived on terms of private friendship with Essex, was one of the most active of the lawyers opposed to him on this trial. It is not pleasant to mention the infirmities of such a man as Bacon; and the most afflicting local association we can find for the reign of James I. is, that he, then Viscount St. Alban's and Lord High Chancellor of England, was impeached by the Commons at the bar of the House of Lords, and was obliged to confess, with shame and sorrow, that his hands—the hands of the first judge in the land—were unclean. None have shewn brighter in our history in a literary sense, and as a philosopher none surpassed him. His was a commanding genius, yet in a full and explicit confession he admitted the twenty-three articles of corruption with which he was charged (in 1621), and threw himself on the mercy of his Peers. Pope, in allusion to him, says bitterly,

“ If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,

“ The greatest, wisest—*meanest* of mankind! ”*

In the reign of Charles I. (1626), the Earl of Bristol appeared in the House of Lords, though forbidden by the king to attend, and accused the Duke of Buckingham of high treason. The most interesting judicial business which the Peers had to perform during this reign, consisted in the trials of the Earl of Strafford and of Archbishop Laud, both of whom were condemned by very small majorities in very thin Houses. Seven Peers alone voted on Laud's trial. At this time the Commons were paramount, and their will could not be gainsaid. Hence they passed a vote, declaring it treason in a king to levy war against his Parliament; and appointing a high court of justice to try Charles for this treason, they sent the vote up to the Peers. The Upper House had then become of no account, and very few of its members were in the habit of attending. On that day there was rather a fuller attendance than usual, there being sixteen Peers present, who immediately and unanimously rejected the vote of the Commons, and adjourned themselves for ten days. Before the ten days had passed, the King had been tried and beheaded. When the Peers met again, according to adjournment, they entered upon business, and sent down some votes to the Commons, of which the latter took no notice; but a few days afterwards they passed a vote that “ they would make no more addresses to the House of Peers, nor receive any from “ them ; and that that House was useless and dangerous, and was therefore to be abolished.”

Cromwell created several Lords, and wished to have an Upper House; but none of the old Peers would attend his summonses, and the attempt was altogether a signal failure. Sir Arthur Hazelrig and some others of the new Peers preferred to sit in the House of Commons which refused to acknowledge the jurisdiction of the other House.

The Lords resumed their functions without opposition in the Parliament which recalled Charles II.

In all probability the number of Peers had never been greater than at the accession of James I., by which time the Tudor dynasty had repaired the diminution occasioned by the wars of the Roses.

* This great man, however, has by his writings conferred so vast a benefit on mankind, that it is a kind of moral justice to his reputation and memory to pardon him, as did James I., ‘in consideration of the profitable employment of his time in the study of philosophy,’ and advancing his species so far in the scale of intellectual superiority.

The following table, from a work published in 1719, shews the alterations since the time of James to the time of George I.

Existing.....	59.....	Extinct.	Additions.
James I.....	62.....	17.....	45
Charles I.....	59.....	21	38
Charles II.....	64.....	53.....	11
James II.....	8.....	8.....	0
William and Mary.....	30.....	21.....	9
Anne.....	30	24	6
George I.....	20.....	10.....	10
	<hr/> 332	<hr/> 154	<hr/> 119
Deduct extinction.....	154		
Peers in 1719	178		

From that period to the present time the rule of increase has been nearly in the same proportion. The peerage in 1834 was twenty-five dukes, nineteen marquesses, one hundred and seventeen earls, sixteen viscounts, one hundred and seventy-nine barons, exclusive of sixteen Scotch and twenty-eight Irish peers, with two archbishops and twenty-four English and two Irish representative bishops, making a total number of the House of Lords four hundred and thirty Peers; whilst now (1848) the amount of the Peers of Parliament is about four hundred and seventy.

The opinions as to the first date of the origin of the Commons is involved in much doubt, and has caused considerable discussion and consequent dissension amongst writers, historical and legal. A writer of a work in 1677, called "A Discourse of the Rise and Progress of Parliaments," says, "Though the 'rise of Parliaments, like the head of Nilus, be unknown, yet they have been of long standing and 'great power; ' and if, as is very possible, the germ of popular power may be traced up to the Saxon times, or even higher, we shall at least find its traces from and since the Conquest, having been gradually acquired and strengthened as the lights of civilization became more widely diffused and accordingly valued; and increasing with the love of arts, learning, and the consequent desire for perfect freedom, which early characterized the British people, which, as it became better understood, was the more ardently desired, more indefatigably struggled for, and more pertinaciously maintained, until it has become 'part and parcel' of the Constitution of our land—a Constitution whose roots seem, if possible, the more firmly implanted in the heart of every one by the storms which have so recently convulsed to the very centre nearly every other city and empire in Europe.

A system of county representation seems to have been established at a period considerably earlier than the admission of burgesses into the great council; but the first county representatives do not appear to have had any other business than to make the king and peers acquainted with the conduct and the grievances of their several counties. For this purpose it was directed, in the reign of King John, not that the knights should attend the Parliament in person, but meet in their counties, and draw up their reports. But the "Mad Parliament" which met at Oxford in the reign of Henry III., in the year 1258, appointed twelve commissioners, and the king twelve more, to whom, acting conjointly, full authority was given to reform the state. This council of twenty-four made several very important regulations, which are known

by the name of the “Provisions of Oxford.” One of these directed that each county should choose four knights, who should make themselves acquainted with the grievances of which their respective neighbourhoods had cause to complain, and should attend the ensuing Parliament in order to give information of the condition of their particular counties. This was the origin of County Representation.



OLD STAIRS AT WESTMINSTER.

After the date of Leicester’s Parliament, thirty years passed by, during which royalty regained its ascendancy; and the measures of the earl being regarded as illegal and invalid, the burgesses were not again summoned to Parliament. Indeed, if some such measure as the admission of the burgesses to the great council “had not become necessary on other accounts, that precedent was more likely to blast than “to give credit to it.”

But while the inhabitants of the country remained vassals at the disposal of the barons, the towns had grown in prosperity and strength, and many of them had received important municipal privileges and franchises from the Sovereigns, whose friendly consideration was drawn towards them by their peaceable and orderly conduct as contrasted with that of the turbulent barons and assuming ecclesiastics, and by a just sense of the value of their labour and ingenuity to the prosperity of the nation. The king, however, still retained the power of levying taxes upon the towns at pleasure: but in early times the “subsidies,” as they were called, were drawn chiefly from the barons and the church; and the demands of the crown upon the towns were not exorbitant, nor indeed heavy. But when the towns had increased in wealth and importance, it began to be thought just that they should contribute more largely than formerly to the necessities of the state, and this concurring with the fact that those necessities had increased beyond what the peers and ecclesiastics could easily be brought to supply, occasioned much heavier exactions than formerly had been laid upon the towns. It was soon found that a power was wanting to enforce such

The year 1265 may be considered the first definite epoch of the House of Commons as at present constituted—at least this is the first occasion on which the return of burgesses to Parliament is at all mentioned by historians; nor, indeed, in any account, however particular, of Parliamentary proceedings previously to that period, is there any appearance of a House of Commons: for if the knights of the shires were spoken of at somewhat earlier periods than we have indicated, it is to be remembered that the members returned by the various counties were originally no other than the representatives of the smaller barons and lesser nobility, and could hardly be considered as representing the people.

demands, and that, in order to proceed peaceably with the boroughs, it would be requisite, in the first instance, to explain the necessity to them, and to overcome opposition by remonstrance and entreaty. To do this with every particular borough would have been inconvenient; and Edward I. soon perceived that there could be no better way of obtaining a supply than by assembling deputies from all the boroughs to take the subject into consideration. For this reason, in the year 1295, the king issued writs to the sheriffs, instructing them to send to the Parliament, not only two knights for the shire, but two deputies from every borough in the county; and that these should be empowered by their respective communities to consent, in their name, to what he and his council should require of them.

It is desirable here to specify a distinction, then in operation, which has now for a long time ceased to exist in the House of Commons. The knights of the shires were really knights, and the burgesses were really burgesses. The former represented the lesser nobility or gentry, who, by their tenures, had, under the feudal system, a right to a place in the great council; while the latter represented the burgesses and citizens of the several towns from which they came. Hence the knights of the shires occupied a different position from that of the burgesses, and appear to have regarded them as forming an inferior and distinct body, with which they had no connexion. Ultimately the immense estates distributed by the Conqueror became much sub-divided, by which the number of the knights and gentry was so much increased as greatly to widen the distance between them and the barons. And in the same proportion that the distance increased between the county representatives and the peers in Parliament, it lessened between them and the burgesses, who, meanwhile, had gone on increasing in wealth and consideration; and as both the knights and the burgesses resembled each other in being representatives of large bodies of people, it in time ceased to seem unsuitable that they should unite to form one House and one interest. After that the gentry made no scruple of appearing as deputies from boroughs, and all practical distinction between a knight and a burgess in Parliament very soon ceased.

Having stated so much in reference to the origin of the House of Commons, we may proceed to notice some facts which illustrate its early condition.

It is quite easy to understand the reluctance of burgesses to undertake the office of representing their towns in Parliament. By doing this they were brought forward unpleasantly, becoming exposed, as individuals, to the rapacity of the local or general authorities, and incurred liabilities to penalties and forfeitures. Besides, their position in the “king’s council” was exceedingly awkward and invidious; and what perhaps weighed more than any other consideration, the condition of the roads and of conveyances was such in those times as to render travelling tedious and uncomfortable, while the state of the times and the country rendered it dangerous. It does not appear as if the office of Member of the Lower House were, in the earliest periods, ever voluntarily undertaken; for the representatives always seem to have been performing a duty highly unpleasant to themselves, and which they were always anxious to terminate as soon as possible, and return to their homes. At first persons elected were obliged to give sureties for their appearance before the king and Parliament. There seems to have been nearly as much difficulty in the case of the county representatives. In the thirteenth century the average qualification

of a knight of the shire varied from £20. to £40. yearly value in land. "The object of selecting the 'man of money,'" says a recent writer, "was evidently with the intention of seizing it in case of non-attendance. If a knight chosen to serve in Parliament chanced to lack property to the amount of £20., whereby he could be distrained, and, being thus impervious to the penalty attached to refusal, escaped from the jurisdiction of the sheriff's bailiwick, and hied him to another county, the sheriff was obliged to seek a substitute in the place of the fugitive to attend the king's council."

It was probably with the view of obviating this reluctance to serve, that the system of wages to representatives was first devised. The pay of a knight of the shire was usually from 3s. to 5s. a day, and that of a citizen or burgess from 2s. to 3s., sums respectively equivalent to much larger amounts at the present time. It was thus, and by the skilful distribution of local offices in the administration of justice, and the collection of taxes, and still more by the increased respectability of the office of a representative in Parliament, that the kings in time found the difficulty of convening the Commons of the kingdom diminish; but it was not until the reign of James I. that a seat in the House of Commons became decidedly an object of ambition and of contest at elections.

The representatives of the Commons in the early Parliaments did not amount to any thing near the present number. They underwent little variation until the reign of Henry VIII., at whose accession the numbers stood as at the head of the ensuing table, which also states the additions afterwards made.

	Counties and Boroughs.	Members.
At the Accession of Henry VIII.	147.....	296
Added by Henry VIII.	32.....	38
,, Edward VI.	22.....	44
,, Mary	14.....	25
,, Elizabeth	31.....	62
,, James I.	14.....	27
	<hr/> Total.....	260.....492

This table does not afford a perfectly true result, because it only states additions, and takes no notice of defalcations in the number. Thus the town of Calais in France was represented in Parliament in the three first reigns on the list; and several boroughs were excused by Elizabeth from sending representatives. From Hollinshed, however, we obtain the following as the actual number of the "Congregates in the Parliament," in the year 1586. For the sake of comparison, we will give his statement with similar ones for the periods immediately preceding and subsequent to the passing of the Reform Bill:—

	Before 1586	Reform Bill.	Since Reform Bill.
Knights.....	90	92	158
Citizens.....	46	50	} 338
Burgesses.....	289	351	
Barons of the Cinque Ports..	14	16	
University Members .....	.....	4	4
England.....	439	513	500
Added for Scotland .....	.....	45	53
,, Ireland .....	.....	100	105
	<hr/> 658		<hr/> 658

Coke says that the number of the Commons was three hundred in the time of Fortescue, and four hundred and ninety-three in his own time. This agrees with our tables, and shows that very

inconsiderable addition has been made to the number of the English representatives since the reign of James I., although the accession of Scotch and Irish Members has greatly enlarged the assembly on the whole. The additions made by Henry VIII. consisted chiefly in giving representatives to the Welsh counties and boroughs.

It does not exactly appear whether in the original constitution of Parliaments any definite period was fixed for their duration. In practice, however, they were frequently called, but the matter seems to have been left to the will of the Crown until the 4th of Edward III., when it was enacted, that a Parliament should be holden every year once, or oftener, if need be. In the reign of Edward's successor, the frequency of Parliaments seems to have been a subject of complaint. Stowe says, that in a Parliament held in London, the clergy granted the king a tenth, and the temporality a fifteenth, on the condition that no other should be holden from the calends of March until Michaelmas. Another statement of the same writer shows that a year's duration of a Parliament was considered a remarkable circumstance in 1406 : “ The 1st of March a Parliament beganne which lasted nigh one whole yeere ; for after the knights had long delayed to grant the king a subsidie, yet in the end being overcome they granted the tax demanded.” Nevertheless Henry VIII., and his successors, prolonged their Parliament at pleasure. That monarch had one that lasted nearly five years and a half; Edward VI. one of four years and five months; Elizabeth one of nearly eight years; James I., one of nearly similar duration; the “ Long-Parliament” commenced in the following reign, and dissolved by Oliver Cromwell, lasted upwards of twelve years; and one of the Parliaments of Charles II. extended to the great length of nearly seventeen years. But in the same reign an act was passed “ for the assembling and holding of Parliaments once in three years at least.” This was intended rather as a limitation of the recent practice than as an extension of the original statute; and was afterwards repealed and again renewed; but in the first year of George I.’s reign, it was alleged that “ a restless and popish faction were designing and endeavouring to renew the rebellion within this kingdom, “ and the report of an invasion from abroad;” and it was therefore enacted that the then existing Parliament should continue for seven years, and no longer. Since then the duration of Parliament has been nominally septennial; but it has, taken generally, been much shorter, in consequence of changes of administration and the demise of the Crown.

Upon the death of the reigning monarch a new Parliament, as most of our readers know, must be summoned after a prescribed time.

In the thirteenth of Edward III. a Parliament was called to consult “ of the domestic quiet, the “ defences of the marches of Scotland, and the security of the seas from enemies.” The Commons were requested to afford their advice on these subjects; but they humbly desired not to be put to consult on matters of which they had no cognizance. In the twenty-first year of the same reign, the Commons were urged to give their opinion on the great question of a war with France. They were persuaded to consult together on the subject, and, after four days deliberation, answered, that “ their humble desire was, that “ the king would be advised therein by the Lords, who had more experience in such affairs than “ themselves.”

So strictly was the business of the Commons limited, in early periods, to the consideration of the pecuniary demands of the Crown, that when there were grievances of which they had cause to complain, or evils which they desired to have redressed, their only mode of proceeding was by petitioning the king.

The Commons, however, were still much below the rank of legislators. Their petitions, though they received a verbal assent from the Throne, were only the rudiments of laws: the judges were afterwards invested with the power of putting them into form; and the king, by adding to them the sanction of his authority, and that sometimes without the assent of the nobles, bestowed validity upon them. The form of a modern bill seems a remaining evidence of this state of things; and is in its form but a petition that it may become a law by the sanction of the king. It begins with describing the grievance that needs redress, or the evil that requires remedy, and then says, "Therefore may it please your Majesty that it 'may be enacted;—and be it enacted, etc,'" proceeding to the details of the measure. The actual difference is now that both the Lords and Commons must concur in such a bill of petition before it reaches the Throne; an authority which is, in point of fact, irresistible, although the forms of the constitution give the power of negativing its prayer.

Mr. Hallam, whose "Constitutional History of England" begins with the reign of Henry VII., numbers the following among the restrictions on the royal authority which then became distinctly established—that the king could levy no new tax without the consent of both Houses, whose previous assent was also necessary to every new law. "England," says the same writer, "had acquired in the fifteenth century a just reputation for the goodness of her laws, and the security of her citizens from oppression. This liberty had been the slow fruit of ages, still waiting the time for its perfect ripeness, but already giving proof of the vigour and industry which had been employed in its culture."

In the early periods of the history of the House of Commons, we find that the kings exercised the power of regulating writs and elections at pleasure, with the advice only of the Privy Council.

After the separation of the two Houses each set up particular jurisdictions for the better regulating their own House, and for the punishing of offences against its privileges; but their orders, as at present, continued in force no longer than while their session lasted. The following two instances of the exercise of its jurisdiction by the Lower House in the time of Elizabeth are from the fourth part of the "Institutes" of Sir Edward Coke. "Thomas Long gave £4. to the Mayor of Westbury to be elected burgess, and he was elected: the mayor was judged by the House of Commons to be imprisoned and fined according to law and usage of Parliament; and the election of Long was declared void. Arthur Hall, a Member of the House, for discovering the conferences of the Parliament, etc., was judged to be committed to the Tower, fined £500., and expelled."

It would appear that nine in the morning was the usual time of meeting, as it long continued to be nominally, even when the actual hour had been altered. The reader may be interested by the following notices of the custom in this respect at different subsequent periods. The first instance is given as quoted by Malcolm from the Journals of the House:—"31st May, 1610.—This day the lord mayor,

“ with the citizens in the liveries of their several companies, went to Putney on their way to Richmond, “ and waited upon Prince Henry coming down to Whitehall; the Duke of Buckingham, Earl of Shrewsbury, “ Earl of Pembroke, and the Earl of Morne, in the barge with him. At nine o’clock in the morning “ they went. The drums and fifes were so loud, and the company so small, that Mr. Speaker thought “ not fit, after nine o’clock, to proceed in any business, but to arise and depart.” About thirty years



HOUSE OF COMMONS, TEMP. GEO. II.

subsequently Hyde, afterwards Earl of Clarendon, but then a Member of the House of Commons, is found complaining “ of the House keeping those disorderly hours, and seldom rising until four in the “ afternoon.”

A writer in 1761 informs us, that “ Although the Speaker always adjourns the House to nine o’clock “ of the morning of the day when they agree to meet again, the House seldom meets till twelve.” Till very recently the House did not meet for the despatch of public business until five in the afternoon—a later hour than that at which Hyde thought it “ disorderly” for the House to remain sitting; and it seldom rises before midnight, and often remains sitting until two, three, or four in the morning. There has of late years been occasionally an early sitting, from twelve till three, for the reception of petitions.

It appears that so long as the two Houses sat together, the Commons had no fixed Speaker; but after deliberating on a subject, they made choice of one of their number, who was presumed to be best acquainted with the business in hand to deliver the conclusion at which they had arrived. This practice was found to occasion delays, and as the Commons could not have a regular President while the two Houses sat together, it is considered one of the principal causes, if not the only cause, that led to the separation. The best way therefore, according to Sir Edward Coke, to ascertain the time when this division took place, would be to find when the Commons first had a settled Speaker, as at present. After the separation, the same writer adds, that the Commons sat in the Chapter House of the Abbot of Westminster, and cites, as his authority, a Parliament roll of Edward III., which consequently proved that the separation had previously taken place. The Commons assembled in the Chapter House adjoining “ Poets’ Corner;” of course by the sufferance of the Abbot of Westminster. The Abbots of Westminster were in those days great personages, and Lords in Parliament; and it does not appear that they held the privileges of the Commons in very high respect. On one occasion the Commons, “ forgetting the solemn “ purposes of their assembling, became so riotous, and created so great turmoil, that the Abbot waxed “ indignant at the profanation, and collected a sufficient strong party, turned the whole legislative wisdom “ out of his House, swearing lustily that the place should not again be defiled with a like rabble.”

The necessary and frequent communications between the two Houses, in the progress of Parliamentary business, doubtless occasioned much inconvenience to be experienced, on account of the distance, while the Commons sat in the Chapter House and the Lords in a room of the Old Palace, on the east side of Old Palace Yard. It is not, therefore, surprising that, when an opportunity offered, St. Stephen’s Chapel should have been thought of for the meetings of the Commons. In what manner it was fitted up for this purpose is no where explained; but it is supposed that the paintings, with which the stone walls of the original Chapel were ornamented, were, previously to that time, exposed to view, and that they were, on that occasion, wainscoted up, and remained forgotten and unknown until the period to which we have already adverted.

Hutton, in his ‘ New View of London,’ thus speaks of the House in 1708:—“ The Commons’ House “ is a little to the northward from the Lords, somewhat nearer the Hall, a commodious building, accom- “ modated with several ranks of seats, covered with green, and matted under foot, for five hundred and “ thirteen gentlemen, of which number this honourable, learned, and judicious assembly consists,—the “ like, in all these respects, perhaps nowhere to be paralleled. On three sides of this House are beautiful “ wainscot galleries, sustained by cantelevers enriched with fruit and other carved curiosities.”

CHAPTER III.

WESTMINSTER HALL—THE COURTS OF JUSTICE—THE SOLEMNITIES CONNECTED WITH THE HALL—
GREAT OFFICERS OF PARLIAMENT—DESTRUCTION OF THE HOUSES BY FIRE.

WE have already adverted to the fact that Westminster Hall was built in the reign of William Rufus, who, on his return from Normandy in 1099, held his court for the first time “in ye newe Hall at ‘Westmynster;’” and Fabian, the chronicler, referring to this period, relates, that “the kynge afflicted ‘the spiritualitie and temporalitie with unreasonable taskes and tributes, the which he spent upon ‘the Towre of London and the makynge of Westmynster Hall.’”

Richard II. renovated and perhaps rebuilt this fine structure in 1397, and in 1398 kept his Christmas there with his characteristic magnificence*. Stow says this was in 1399; but it must be remembered that many of the older chroniclers commenced the year with the feast of the Nativity. King Richard was, in fact, deposed in 1399, and on the Christmas of that year was a prisoner in Pontefract Castle.



Partial repairs have been made from time to time in this fine edifice, the appearance of which, with the buildings attached, we may judge from the drawing by Hollar.

During the reign of George IV. the timber roof was thoroughly repaired with well seasoned oak. Prior to the fire which destroyed both Houses of Parliament, it had been determined to renovate the whole of the interior stone work of the Hall; and this has been completed, as nearly as possible, in conformity with the original structure.

* At this great festival seventy-eight oxen, three hundred sheep, and poultry incalculable in amount, were daily consumed. The number of guests each day amounted to ten thousand. We need not, therefore, wonder that Richard kept two thousand cooks, who were deeply learned in their profession, as appears from a publication, compiled in 1390, called “*The Forme of Cury*,” by the Head Cook, which contains receipts for the most dainty dishes of the time.

The style of building here preserved is the true Gothic, or rather, in the more modern phraseology, the Saracenic.

On entering this noble Hall, impressed, as the mind of every one must be, with its vast magnificence, we are naturally led to regret the necessity there was, a few years since, to raise the floor or pavement six or seven feet, by which means the grand symmetry of the building is injured; and an eye, but little accustomed to just proportions, will, at the first glance, discern the want of height. This is reputed to be the largest room in Europe, unsupported by pillars. The roof is asserted by some to be constructed of Irish oak, which has a reputation over that of other countries, by possessing the peculiar property of resisting the worm. By others it is said to have been built of chesnut wood.

The roof is supported by thirteen Gothic ribs, of noble dimensions, springing from the centre of each pier. It is in many places adorned with angels, supporting the arms of Richard II. and of Edward the Confessor. The stone moulding which runs round the Hall has likewise many devices, particularly that allusive to Richard II.—the hart couchant under a tree. That construction has been justly admired for its simplicity and elegance. The whole roof, as well as the more ancient parts of the Hall, is in the highest state of preservation. The skylights and dormer windows in the roof are evidently modern additions, and rather interfere with the general simplicity of the structure: yet, notwithstanding, the lights produced from them will afford to the eye of the painter a brilliant variety of tints, diffusing themselves over this richly ornamented roof.

At the upper end of this Hall formerly stood the Courts of Chancery and King's-Bench. On this spot, Stowe tells us, “There was anciently a marble stone, of twelve feet in length and three in breadth; “ and also a marble chair, where the Kings of England formerly sat at their dinners; and at other solemn “times the Lord Chancellor. (Possibly the original King's Bench.)

“At this marble stone divers matters of consequence used to be transacted;” and, as we have before mentioned, the first Master of the Rolls was sworn in, in the fiftieth year of Edward III., at the table of marble stone in Westminster Hall.

On the western side of the Hall are seven large doorways communicating with the new Law Courts of Westminster, designed by Sir John Soane in 1822. These are erected on the site of the Old Exchequer Court and other offices. The Court of Common Pleas, as well as the Courts of Queen's Bench and Exchequer, are here; and we quote Stowe to shew the origin of these courts. He says,

“In former times, both before and since the Conquest, the courts and benches followed the king “wheresoever he went; this custom being at length thought painful and chargeable to the people, it was, “in the year 1224, the ninth year of Henry III., agreed that there should be a standing (or common “place appointed), where matters should be heard and judged, which was in the great Hall at “Westminster. In this Hall he ordained three judgment seats; to wit, at the entry on the right hand, “the Common Pleas, where civil matters are to be pleaded, especially such as touch land or contraets. “At the upper end of the Hall, on the right hand, or south-east corner, the King's Bench, where pleas “of the crown have their hearing. And on the left hand, or south-west corner, sitteth the Lord

“ Chancellor, accompanied with the Master of the Rolls, and with certain other of the eleven men, learned for the most part in the civil law, and called Masters of the Chancery, which have the king’s fee.”



WESTMINSTER HALL.

“ And here, it should be noted, that the kings of this realm have used sometimes to sit in person in King’s Bench ; namely, King Edward IV., in the year 1462, in Michaelmas Term, sat in the King’s Bench three days together, in the open court, to understand how his laws were ministered and executed. Hence the court was called *Curia Domini Regis*. The first Chief Justice of the King’s Bench was named Robert Le Brun ; he was appointed by Henry the Third.”

The judges of the courts were made knights bannerets, and had materials given them for making most sumptuous habits for the occasion. Among others, they “ had for a cloke one hundred and twenty “ bellies of minever pure,” *i. e.* the ermine, which they retain to this day. The judges in ancient times rode to court ; at first on mules ; but, in the reign of Queen Mary, they changed those animals for the more docile pad.

The Courts of Law as now arranged are very commodious, and well adapted for the purposes to which they are applied ; it was in one of the adjoining rooms to the old Court of Exchequer that Elizabeth is reported to have given her favourite Essex a box on the ear.

To enumerate all the princely treats and tournaments held here, would be tedious and foreign to our purpose. One feast, held here in 1243, where Richard, Earl of Cornwall, brother to Henry III., kept feast here on his marriage with Cincia, daughter to the Countess of Provence; at which feast were told *triginta millia*, thirty thousand dishes of meat at dinner.

Thus various have been the uses to which this grand Hall has been applied. The poor, as well as the rich, have each, by turns, had their festivities; Justice has invariably and impartially been administered; Parliaments have sat here; Ministers and Peers have been tried; here many Sovereigns have held their Coronation feasts; and here one King has been condemned to death.

In 1236, about fifty years after the building of this Hall, we find a remarkable overflow of the Thames took place; and, “in the great Palace of Westminster, men did row with wherries in the middle of the Hall, being forced to ride to their chambers.” Again, in 1242, the Thames overflowed the banks about Lambeth, drowning houses and fields for the space of six miles; “so that, in the great Hall at Westminster, many took to their horses, because the water ran over all.”

In 1658, the tide ebbed and flowed twice in three hours; and, on March 22, 1682, three times in four hours. On the 24th of March, 1735, the tide ran so high, that the lawyers were conveyed away in boats.

Having given as succinct and explicit an account of the Old Palace, its uses, changes, historical associations, connexions, and events, as our limits will allow, we have now to add a brief enumeration of the high public functionaries, whose official duties connect them with the Houses of Parliament, and who have residences or offices in the Palace.

Of these officers, the principal is the Lord Great Chamberlain of England, the Hereditary Governor of the Palace of Westminster.

This office was granted by King Henry I., about the year 1100, to Alberic de Vere, Earl of Oxford, in these words:—“*Magistrum camerarium totius Angliæ*,” and was enjoyed for many successions by the Earls of Oxford, till King Richard II., by violence, took it away: the House of Commons prayed the King that it might be restored to Richard, then Earl of Oxford; being, as it was then alleged, his due inheritance; yet, in the 1st Henry VI., that king granted it to the Duke of Gloucester: the 23rd Henry VIII., John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, recovered the office by the award of the king, which was afterwards confirmed by Act of Parliament (27th Henry VIII.) His son John, Earl of Oxford, at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth, claimed to officiate as Lord Great Chamberlain, and executed the office which his son Edward inherited, and officiated at the coronation of James I.

Robert, eleventh Baron Willoughby de Eresby, inherited the high office of Lord Great Chamberlain of England, in right of his mother the Lady Mary de Vere, daughter and heiress of John, sixteenth Earl of Oxford, and having greatly distinguished himself in a military career, was installed a Knight of the illustrious Order of the Garter; and in 1626 created Earl of Lindsey. In the 11th Charles I. he was made Lord High Admiral, and at the breaking out of the civil wars was chosen General of the King’s Forces, and fell mortally wounded at the battle of Edge Hill, in 1642. His descendants for several

generations continued to exercise the office of Great Chamberlain until Robert, fourth Earl of Lindsey, was created Duke of Ancaster and Kesteven, in 1715. Upon the decease of Robert, fourth duke, without issue, in 1779, the ancient barony of Willoughby de Eresby devolved upon his Grace's eldest sister and co-heir, the Lady Priscilla Elizabeth Bertie (wife of Sir Peter Burrell, Bart., first Baron of Gwydyr,) in whose right her son, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, now exercises that office.

“ To this great officer (writes the accurate compiler of ‘ The Laws of Honour’) belongs livery and lodgings in the Royal Court, and certain fees due from each Archbishop or Bishop when they perform their homage or fealty to the Sovereign, and from all the Peers of the realm at their creation, or doing their homage or fealty; and at the Coronation of every King or Queen claims forty ells of crimson velvet for his own robes, as also on the Coronation Day, before the King rises, to bring his apparel, and after he is by him dressed, the bed and all furniture of the Chamber is his fees, with all the King’s apparel that he wears on that day: he carries the gloves and linen used by the King at the Coronation, likewise the sword and scabbard, and the gold to be offered by the King, with the robe royal and crown, and to put them on; and to serve the King that day before and after dinner with water to wash his hands, and to have the basin and towel for his fees.

“ To him belongs the care of providing all things in the House of Lords during the time of Parliament, to which he has an apartment near the Lords’ House.

“ He has the government of the whole Palace of Westminster; he also issues forth his warrants for the preparing, fitting, and furnishing, of Westminster Hall against coronations and trials of Peers or others tried by Peers in Parliament.

“ The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, the Yeoman Usher, and door-keepers, are under his command.

“ It is in his breast to dispose of the Sword of State to what Lord he pleases, to be carried before the King or Queen when they come to Parliament; and goes on the right hand of the sword next to the King’s or Queen’s person, and the Lord Marshal on the left. Upon all solemn occasions, the keys of Westminster Hall, and the keys of the Court of Wards, and Court of Requests, are delivered to him.”

The other officers are, the Lord High Chancellor, the Clerks of Parliament, the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, the Yeoman Usher, Sergeant-at-Arms, Librarian, etc.

The Lord High Chancellor performs all matters which appertain to the Speaker of the House of Lords, and sits upon the woolsack, with the Great Seal of England constantly before him.

“ He is the inlarger, explainer, interpreter, or pronoucer of the King’s commands or pleasure; and that which is further observable, of seventy-two officers under his jurisdiction, more than forty-four of them are employed in Parliament concerns; either upon its summoning or during its sitting. And as his warrant is the second warrant that gives life to a Parliament, and vivacity to its continuance by sessions and recesses, so he gives the second fiat to its dissolution. He hath also an apartment near the Lords’ House for himself to retire to, and for his Sergeant-at-Arms and others of his attendants.”—

(Laws of Honour.)

The Clerks of Parliament sit at the Table of the House of Lords during the debates, and assist in the reading of petitions and other business.

The Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod has the charge of the chamber in which the Peers sit during the Session of Parliament: he is sent to summons the Members of the House of Commons to the presence of the King or Queen on state occasions in the House of Lords. He is called Black Rod, from the black staff or rod, about three feet long, tipped with silver, and gilt with the king's arms at one end, and a lion couchant at the other end, and a gilt knob in the middle, which he carries in his hand: he is always a person of quality, and born the king's subject, and if not a knight, is made one upon admission to this office, and hath his office by patent; the first grant of it beginning in the reign of King Henry VIII.

“ Before the sitting of Parliament he observes the Lord Great Chamberlain's directions, in taking care that the House be fitted with all things for the reception of the king and those who sit there.

“ His employment also is to introduce Lords into that House. And after that House is sat, he hath employments concerning the commitment of delinquents, etc.

“ He has a seat allowed him, but without the bar; and to ease him more in these and many other employments, he has an usher to assist him, called the Yeoman Usher; also door-keepers, etc. He has a residence in the Palace.”

The Sergeant-at-Arms attends the House of Lords, and carries the mace before the Speaker, whether he be the Lord Chancellor or not, within the Lords' House up to the very chair of state, and after he has made his obeisances, he lays it down on the first woolsack by the Speaker, and so departs till the Speaker has occasion for him again upon the rising of the House.

The Speaker of the House of Commons is also allowed a residence in the Palace of Westminster, his laborious functions requiring his almost constant presence in the House of Commons. The Speaker never quits the chair whilst the House of Commons is sitting, except when the House goes into committee, and then he quits the chair, which is assumed by the chairman of committees, who is a Member selected to that office. The Speaker then can act, speak, and vote like an ordinary Member; but in other divisions on any question, he only gives the *casting vote* when the numbers are even. The numerous officers belonging to the House of Commons are likewise accommodated with apartments in which to conduct the business of their several departments.

There are three Table Clerks, who sit at a table in front of the Speaker during the time that the Members of the House of Commons are engaged in debate or in committee.

Irregular as was the whole and extensive pile of buildings, comprehending Westminster Hall, the Courts of Law, and the two Houses of Parliament, the official residences of their officers, with the accommodation of the coffee-houses, dining-rooms, etc., the communications with each other were so convenient, that the Speaker went in state from his own dwelling to the House of Commons; and the Lords and Commons conferred in the Painted Chamber, as readily as if their Houses were beneath the same roof. But this line of communication, nevertheless, had its defects, and they seem to have attracted the notice of Sir John Soane, the eminent architect, who, in his work entitled “Designs for Public and

"Private Buildings," has observed—viz., "In the year 1800, the Court of Requests was made into a "House of Lords, and the old buildings, of a slight character, several stories in height, surrounding that "substantial structure, were converted into accommodations for the officers of the House of Lords, and in "the necessary communications. The exterior of these old buildings, forming the front of the House of "Lords, as well as the interior, is constructed chiefly with timber, covered with plaster; in such an "extensive assemblage of combustible materials, should a fire happen, what would become of the Painted "Chamber, the House of Commons, and Westminster Hall? Where would the progress of the fire be "arrested? The want of security from fire, the narrow, gloomy, and unhealthy passages, and the "insufficiency of the accommodation in this building, are important objects which call loudly for revision "and amendment." These observations have unfortunately proved too prophetically correct; and appear to have been well warranted by the explanation given of the great and rapid extension of the conflagration.

Such as we have here described was the state of the Houses of Parliament, when, between six and seven o'clock in the evening of Thursday, the 16th of October, 1834, the metropolis was alarmed by sudden and long continued cries of "fire," followed by the rush of fire engines and crowds of persons hurrying towards the south-west of the metropolis, when the lurid state of the atmosphere, increased at every instant, indicated but too truly the truth of the alarm—that spot was the House of Lords. It was about twenty-five minutes to seven when the first alarm was given, and by seven o'clock the conflagration was raging most alarmingly.

From the part of the building opposite Henry VII. Chapel, in the corner next to Westminster Hall, was the spot whence the flames, first bursting forth, spread in three different directions. Thence it advanced to the body of the House of Lords, taking within its range the several apartments over the piazza facing Palace Yard, thence to the Painted Chamber and the Library. These apartments were all destroyed, but the books having been previously removed, whilst the latter room was undergoing alterations, were fortunately preserved.

The New Gallery, built by Sir John Soane, as well as the staircase, were preserved, owing to the thickness of the intervening wall. By nine o'clock all the apartments were in flames, and although the exterior walls remained standing, the interior was quite burnt down, and the roof and ceiling fell. Between ten and eleven o'clock, two great masses of the front fell in, but the fire still raged with unmitigated fury; other portions falling in from time to time, until the whole building was reduced to such a state of dangerous ruin, that on the subsidence of the fire it became necessary to level the ruins with the ground. The destruction of the modern parts of the structure revealed portions of old walls, etc., which unquestionably formed part of the ancient Palace.

Another direction taken by the flames was still more extensively and rapidly destructive. This line was eastward towards the river, the flames spreading also to the north and south, sweeping before them down to the very gardens all but the ancient walls. The numerous rooms which formed the offices of the House of Commons were first consumed, and the loss here in books, papers, precedents, &c., was very great. The House of Mr. Ley, the Chief Clerk of the House of Commons, in Cotton Garden was also



INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

A.D. 1834.



EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

A.D. 1834.

destroyed, as was the Library of the Commons, which occupied two stories, and was much more valuable than that of the House of Lords, many of the volumes of which were saved before the fire had commenced its devastation in that quarter. Next the element attained to the House of Commons, of whose safety, from its immediate proximity to the river, there had been sanguine hopes entertained; but unfortunately the tide was low, and, from the enclosed state of the building, the fire engines could not be brought to play upon it effectually. The great quantity of wood in the beams, ceilings, and fittings up of the House, administered fresh fuel to the flames, and in an incredibly short space the whole extensive and important fabric was reduced to a mere shell of calcined stone and brick-work, except the venerable Chapel of St. Stephen, "which stood," says a writer of the time and facts, "in its strength and beauty like a rock amid a sea of fire, and broke the force of its waves, which, till then, had gone on conquering and overthrowing."

From the House of Commons the fire passed on to the Speaker's official residence, which sustained great damage, though by no means to the extent as first apprehended, as the approach of the fire was foreseen in sufficient time to allow of the removal of the most valuable property.

The other direction which the fire took, from the original point of its bursting forth, was westward, along the range of buildings leading to the Commons' Entrance in Margaret-street, and facing Saint Margaret's Church. The whole was consumed, nothing but the walls being left by eleven o'clock. The Law Courts were in imminent danger, but, by the incessant working of the engines, these were saved.

When it is considered that the fire raged simultaneously in all these directions, forming one tremendous conflagration, it will be seen that Westminster Hall was in the greatest danger, while hemmed in on the east side and south end by the flames. Fears for its safety were entertained from the first appearance of the fire and through its continuance, and its preservation was the great object of anxiety and exertion amongst all classes. More than once its destruction appeared inevitable, but its strong stone walls opposed such an effectual resistance to the consuming element, and fire-engines which had, at an early period, been introduced into the body of the Hall, played through the great window with such effect on the surrounding flames, that the only injury it sustained was in the destruction of the glass in the upper part. Had the fire made its way through, the splendid roof must have been destroyed, and the whole structure, consecrated by antiquity, and admirable from the beauty of its construction, must have been a ruin.

Next to the preservation of Westminster Hall, the safety of the cloisters and vaulted rooms, which formed, as it were, the ground-floor of the House of Commons, was an object of anxiety to those who were acquainted with the beauty of these ancient apartments, including the Speaker's Official Dining Room, which (as we have already described) lay immediately under the room in which the Commons' assembled. In consequence of the strength offered by these arches, they were also preserved in such a state as to admit of complete restoration. The cloisters formed communications between the Houses and the different arched rooms under the Commons.

The origin of the fire was at first attributed to design, but it is now generally believed to have

been caused by the overheating of some flues, accounted for by the fact that, for some days previously, certain subordinate officers in the Exchequer had been engaged in burning, in the buildings adjacent to the House of Lords, a collection of old documents and letters which had become useless, in consequence of the recent alterations in conducting the business of the Exchequer Office. It is supposed that, in the execution of this duty, the men grew too impatient, and burned a great number together, by which the flues were choked, and thus the fire broke out in several places at once.*

* Mr. Braidwood, superintendent of the London Fire Office, who made a report to his establishment, attributes the devastating progress of the flames to the following causes:—1. “The total want of party walls.—2. The passages which intersected the buildings, in every direction, acted as funnels to convey the “fire.—3. The repeated alterations in the buildings, which had been made with more regard to expedition than security.—4. The immense quantity of timber “used in the interior.—5. The great depth and extent of the buildings.—6. A smart breeze of wind.—7. An indifferent supply of water, which, though amply “sufficient for any ordinary occasion, was inadequate for such an immense conflagration.—8. My own and the fireman’s total ignorance of the localities of the “place. In fires in private dwellings, warehouses, or manufactories, some idea may generally be formed of the division of the inside of the premises, from observ-“ing the appearance of the outside; but in the present case that rule was useless.”

“After all it must not be suppressed,” says Topham in his little volume, “that many suspicious circumstances have been put together, so as to excite an “impression that the fire might be the work of incendiarism. The coincidence of the uncertainty where it began; its rapidity; its suddenness and simultaneousness “in several places; and that a bundle of matches are said to have been found under one of the trees in the Speaker’s garden, are statements to give countenance to “such a belief; but notwithstanding their spaciousness, no evidence has been brought to light, under the official investigation, to render it credible that it was the “contrivance of any Guy Vaux conspirators; and indeed, the final report made by the Privy Council, after giving in detail the evidence of the different individuals “who were examined, concludes by stating, ‘That there does not exist, in the minds of the Members of the Privy Council, the slightest doubt that the calamity “‘was purely the result of accidental causes.’”

THE FOLLOWING WAS THE OFFICIAL REPORT OF DAMAGE.

Report upon the damage done to the Buildings, Furniture, &c. of the Two Houses of Parliament, the Speaker’s Official Residence, Official Residence of the Clerk of the House of Commons, and to the Courts of Law at Westminster Hall, (occurred by the fire, on the 16th day of October, 1834,) as far as at present the same can be ascertained.

HOUSE OF PEERS.—The House, Robing Rooms, Committee Rooms, in the West Front, and the rooms of the resident officers, as far as the octagon Tower at the South end of the building, totally destroyed. The Painted Chamber totally destroyed; the north end of the Royal Gallery abutting on the Painted Chamber destroyed from the door leading into the Painted Chamber, as far as the first compartment of columns. The Library and the adjoining rooms, which are now undergoing alterations, as well as the Parliament Offices, and the Offices of the Lord Great Chamberlain, together with the Committee Rooms, Housekeeper’s Apartments, &c., in this part of the building, are saved.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—The House, Libraries, Committee Rooms, Housekeeper’s Apartments, &c., are totally destroyed, excepting the Committee Rooms, Nos. 11, 12, 13, and 14, which are capable of being repaired.

The Official Residence of Mr. Ley, Clerk of the House. This building is totally destroyed.

The Official Residence of the Speaker. The State Dining Room under the House of Commons is much damaged, but capable of restoration. All the rooms, from the oriel window to the south side of the House of Commons, are destroyed; the Levee Rooms, and other parts of the building, together with the Public Galleries, and part of the Cloisters, very much damaged.

THE COURTS OF LAW.—These buildings will require some restoration.

WESTMINSTER HALL.—No damage has been done to this building.

FURNITURE.—The Furniture, Fittings, and Fixtures, to both the Houses of Lords and Commons, with the Committee Rooms belonging thereto, are, with few exceptions, destroyed; the public furniture, at the Speaker’s House, is in great part destroyed; the furniture generally of the Courts of Law has sustained considerable damage. The strictest inquiry is in progress as to the cause of this calamity, but there is not the slightest reason to suppose that it has arisen from any other than accidental causes.

The sole portion left entire was the crypt of St. Stephen's Chapel, which, as appears from a roll discovered a few years since, was built on a concrete basis, in the reign of Edward I., and will be preserved in the New Palace.

The destruction of the House of Commons was complete, and it was so far fortunate that Parliament was prorogued, and as there was every probability that it would not be called together again before February in the following year (1835), there was time to make temporary accommodation for the two Houses.

Government accordingly gave immediate directions for the necessary preparations, and it was ordered that the Painted Chamber which, for many years previous to the conflagration, had been used as the room in which the conferences between the two Houses were held, having been partially spared, should be fitted up as the temporary House of Lords: the walls had to be elevated about one-third; it was then covered in with a boarded ceiling and slated roof.

The late House of Lords (the ancient Court of Requests) was then put in thorough repair, and fitted up for the assembly of the Commons. The dimensions of this apartment, which has been already spoken of, are in length from north to south about one hundred and twenty feet, thirty-eight feet in breadth, and of a proportionate height. The original room is most undoubtedly of very ancient structure, and if not the original great Hall of the Confessor's Palace, which it is supposed to have been, was assuredly enriched at a very early period of the Norman line, of which evidences were easily traced in the mouldings surmounting the three windows at the south end, when laid open after the fire. It is still occupied by the Commons until the apartments in the New Palace are ready for their reception.

With remarkable celerity the work, being commenced in November 1834, was completed in a satisfactory and even elegant manner, so as to be entirely ready for the Meeting of Parliament, which took place on the 19th of February, 1835. Sir Robert Smirke was the architect employed. In these Chambers the two Houses assembled until the prorogation, and then, on the close of the Session, further alterations were made, and additional lobbies and temporary rooms added in communication with both Chambers, the whole costing a sum amounting nearly to £50,000; but it must be remembered, that however large this expenditure may appear, such was the necessity for the completion of the arrangements within a very short space of time, that the amount cannot be deemed excessive, and the work was, moreover, most competently executed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.

It may be easily supposed that on the Meeting of Parliament, one of the earliest steps taken was in reference to the measures to be decided upon in consequence of the destruction of the Houses of Parliament, and, on the 2nd of March, 1835, It was ordered,

“ That a Select Committee be appointed to consider and report upon such plans as may be most fitting and convenient for the permanent accommodation of the Houses of Parliament.”

This Committee consisted of

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Althorp.)	Lord Francis Egerton. Sir Richard Vyvyan.	Mr. Williams Wynn. Mr. Tracey.
The Marquis of Chandos.	Mr. O'Connell.	Mr. Warburton.
Lord John Russell.	Mr. Hume.	Sir George Clerk.
Lord Stanley.	Sir Harry Verney.	Mr. Hughes Hughes.
Sir John Cam Hobhouse.	Mr. Ridley Colborne.	Mr. Bannerman.
Sir James Graham.	Sir Charles Burrell.	Lord Granville Somerset (Chairman.)
Mr. Littleton.	Sir Robert Inglis.	Lord Viscount Howick.

This Committee made a report, which was printed, and bears date 3rd June, 1835, in which, after giving the evidence they had obtained by examining the Clerks of Parliament, and others, they came to a series of thirty-four resolutions, referring to the construction of the new House of Parliament, directing that the Official Residence of the Speaker should be within the precincts of the buildings about to be erected; but that the residence of the Chief Clerk need not be a portion of such buildings.

It was also resolved,

“ That it is expedient that the design for the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament be left open to general competition, and “ that the style of the building be either Gothic or Elizabethan;” that “ the plans be delivered in to the office of the Woods and Buildings, on or before the first day of November, “ 1835.” Moreover, “ that in order more effectually to secure a correct decision upon the merits of the several plans, it is expedient that an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, requesting him to appoint five Commissioners to examine the report generally to both Houses of Parliament upon the plans offered by competition; and that such Commissioners shall select and classify such of the plans, “ being not less than three, or more than five in number, as shall seem to them most worthy of attention, “ and shall state, if required, the grounds upon which the propriety of such selection and classification is founded;” and finally, “ That a premium of £300. be given to each of the parties whose plans shall be recommended by the Commissioners, and shall be considered by them as worthy of the reward; and that

“ the successful competitor shall not be considered as having necessarily a claim to be intrusted with the execution of the work; but if not employed, he shall receive an additional reward of £1000.”

Following out these resolutions a commission was formed, consisting of Charles Hanbury Tracy, Esq., M. P., Hon. Sir Edward Cust, Hon. Thomas Liddell, and George Vivian, Esq. to consider the plans for building the Houses of Parliament, and report to the Committee. It was at first contemplated that the old buildings might be so far retained that with additions and improvements the Houses of Parliament might again assemble on the old and time-honored site; but, on due consideration, this idea was abandoned. In fact, it can hardly be said, that this country has ever yet possessed such ‘Houses of Parliament,’ as may, in every point of view, be termed worthy of the age and nation; the old Houses were neither suitable in an architectural point of view, nor, as concerned the convenience of the Members of Parliament, constructed in such a way as to be suitable for the great amount and importance of the business. The original buildings, confined and incommodious, had been added from time to time until the whole structure was a piece of patchwork, externally and internally inconvenient—“cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd.” It having been finally resolved that a structure should be raised which should be as perfect in all its arrangements and details as possible, whilst it should give scope for the development of national architectural ability; plans were advertised for, and as many as ninety-seven sets of designs were sent; many of them remarkable for their ingenuity, beauty, and high talent. The Committee, after much consultation, selected the plan No. 64, to which the Commissioners had awarded the first premium,* and in May 1836, reported to the House of Commons that they considered themselves warranted in recommending this plan for adoption: subsequently to the award, however, some alterations were made at the suggestion of the Commissioners as well as of the architect himself, and which they considered calculated materially to improve the original. The estimate of this plan was £724,986; and the Commissioners in their Report state, that they were unanimous in the selection, adding, that they had “ confined themselves to the consideration of the beauty and grandeur of the general design, to its practicability, to the skill shewn in various arrangements of the building, and the accommodation afforded, to the attention paid to the instructions delivered, as well as to the equal distribution of light and air throughout every part of the structure.”

With a view to the selection of the proper stone to be employed in the erection of the new building, the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury authorized, in the autumn of 1838, a commission, consisting of Mr. Barry, the architect, Sir H. De La Beche, Mr. W. Smith, and Mr. C. H. Smith, to make a tour of inspection to the various stone quarries in the kingdom, and also to examine the different stone which had been used in the erection of public and other buildings; and an elaborate report was published of the result of their labours; in which they recommended that the most fit and proper material to be employed was the stone from Bolsover Moor and its neighbourhood. This quarry, however, did not yield

* The Commissioners awarded premiums to the authors of four plans, £1500. to the first, and £500. to each of the others. The second prize was obtained by J. W. Buckler, the third by D. Hamilton, and the fourth by W. Railton.

the quantity required, and the hard magnesian limestone from Anston, in Yorkshire, has been used for the exterior of the building, with the Caen stone for the interior.

It was not until 1839 that the building of the Parliament Houses actually commenced ; since that period it has been steadily progressing. From time to time various alterations and additions to Mr. Barry's original plans have been made, and in 1844 it appears from the evidence of the Earl of Lincoln (First Commissioner of the Woods and Forests) that the original estimate had, up to this period, been increased from £707,104 to £1,016,924. 12s. 6d.

The river front of this splendid structure is the finest, and is not surpassed by any edifice in Europe. Its design and execution place Mr. Barry on a level with the first architects of ancient or modern times ; and most ably has he been seconded by the artists employed, as well as by the contractors for the erection of the greater portion of the building, Messrs Grissell and Peto, who have most faithfully and admirably carried out the vast and beautiful designs, the exterior of this noble pile being all in the purest Gothic style, whilst the interior is remarkable for its elegance and variety, combined with great commodiousness, and is faultless in its adaptation. Accurate drawings of portions of the River Front are given in this work.

The Houses of Lords and Commons are placed as nearly as possible in the centre of the whole mass of buildings, as being the best position for communication with each other, and with their respective offices, for security from noise and disturbance, as well as for the purpose of lighting, warming, and ventilating them in the most convenient manner. The main floor is on a level with the old floor of St. Stephen's Chapel. The principal public approach to the Committee Rooms is by a broad flight of steps leading directly from the Central Hall to the Upper Waiting Hall, whence there is direct communication to the Committee Rooms of both Houses.

The whole of the official residences communicate with the Principal Floor, and have separate entrances and staircases; the Speaker's apartments are adapted for State Levees and dinners. In order to guard against accidents by fire, and to render the entire edifice fire proof, all the main beams and benders are of iron, with brick arches between the floors.

On the 29th of April, 1841, it was resolved that “ a Select Committee be appointed to take into “ consideration the promotion of the Fine Arts of this country in connexion with the re-building of “ the New Houses of Parliament ;” and on the 6th May, 1841, the following Members of the House of Commons were appointed :

Mr. Hawes,
Mr. Labouchere,
Sir R. Peel,
Mr. Gally Knight,
Mr. Hume,

Mr. Wyse,
Mr. Blake,
Sir R. H. Inglis,
Lord Brabazon,
Lord F. Egerton,

Mr. Ewart,
Mr. Milnes,
Colonel Rawdon,
Mr. H. F. Hope,
Mr. Pusey,

who stated in a Report, made on the 18th of June following, that it was the unanimous opinion of very distinguished professors and admirers of Art, that so important and national a work as the erection of the two Houses of Parliament affords an opportunity which ought not to be neglected

of encouraging, not only the higher, but every subordinate branch of Fine Art in this country; adding, "Your Committee fully concur in this opinion, supported as it is by witnesses of extensive information, and by artists of the highest character and ability." The Committee went on to say, that "In adopting this, however, and further, in recommending that measures should be taken, " without delay, to encourage the Fine Arts by employing them in the decoration of the New Houses of " Parliament, they desired to express their decided opinion, that to accomplish this object successfully, " it was absolutely requisite that a plan should be previously determined on (and that as soon as " practicable,) in order that the architect and the artist or artists to be employed might work, not " only in conjunction with, but in aid of each other."

The Committee had examined during the year (1841) many individuals well acquainted with the progress and position of the arts, both at home and abroad, and the result of the enquiry carried on with the best and most impartial spirit of investigation tended to direct the Committee in selecting the FRESCO style as the fittest for the decorations of public buildings, eligible from the latest required, the effect of the productions, and the duration of the process. The Report concludes thus: "During " this enquiry the attention of your Committee has been called to one branch of the Fine Arts, hardly " known in this country, viz. Fresco,* and which must, in a great measure, depend for its encouragement " upon direct public patronage. Fresco Painting has lately been revived on the Continent, and employed " in the decoration of public buildings at Munich. The space which it demands for its free development, " and the subjects which it is peculiarly fitted to illustrate, combine to point out national buildings " as almost the only proper sphere for the display of its peculiar characteristics, grandeur, breadth, and " simplicity. Your Committee having carefully considered the evidence, are disposed to recommend " that this style or mode of painting should be adopted."

* Fresco is a method of painting on stucco, or other hard plaster, whilst the substance is soft or *fresh*, whence it derives its name. Of all the modes employed in painting that in fresco is the most ancient, the most durable, the most expeditiously performed, requires the greatest skill in execution, and is the most worthy of being employed in the embellishment of splendid edifices.

Of the antiquity of fresco painting there can be no doubt; its simplicity and the ignorance of the ancients of oils, varnishes, &c., are sufficient vouchers. The Egyptians practised it from an unknown antiquity, as the chests or cases of their mummies, and the painting in their tombs, abundantly prove; as they do also their surprising durability. The great series of pictures in the Poikile, a grand gallery, portico, and place of exercise, at Athens, of which Pausanias speaks appear to have been painted in this manner, as well as those which surrounded the statue of Jupiter Olympus at Elis.

In executing paintings in fresco the necessary preparations are the sketch, the cartoon in full size cut in suitable pieces, the colours prepared with water only, and the two sorts of plaster, the rendering and finishing coats on which the picture is to be painted. The painter's mind must be full of his subject; everything must be predetermined on, as no alteration or amendment can take place: he must have a rapid and decisive execution, and be well acquainted with the qualities of his colours, as they dry lighter when laid on. There are two operators, the plasterer in constant attendance, and the painter who follows him, and dyes or embues his colours into the very body of the plaster whilst it yet be wet.

Everything being in readiness, the plasterer renders the work with a coat of coarse stucco formed of lime and sand, and finishes with the finer to such a surface as the artist requires, who then pricks his outline through the cartoon, and draws it with a style to prevent the colours running beyond them. The outlines of Michel Angelo's Last Judgment are cut in with a depth, boldness, and decision, quite surprising, that make the figures almost appear in bas relief. The colours must then be dashed on at once, in a broad, bold, and general manner, that with an able artist must produce a grand style. The frescoes of Rafaelle are finer coloured, bolder drawn, and more vigorously executed, than his easel pictures. Michel Angelo is never known to any certainty to have touched oil; and the frescoes of Annibal Caracci in the Palazzo Farnese, are the finest of his works.

The Committee were, on this occasion, evidently, and very properly, directed in their decision by the evidence of Mr. Eastlake, and also by a very able paper on Fresco Painting by that gentleman laid before them, and from which we extract the following: "We should dwell on the fact, that the " arts in England under Henry III., in the 13th century, were as much advanced as in Italy itself; " that our architecture was even more characteristic, and freer from classical influence; that sculpture, " to judge from Wells Cathedral, bids fair to rival the contemporary efforts in Tuscany; and that our " painting of the same period might fairly compete with that of Sienna and Florence. Specimens " of early English painting were lately to be seen: some very important relics still exist on the walls " of the edifices at Westminster. The undertaking now proposed might be more interesting, since, " after a lapse of six centuries, it would renew the same style of decoration on the same spot. The " painters employed in the time of Henry III. were English: their names are preserved.

" The first conviction that should press upon us should be, that our own country and our own " English feelings, are sufficient to produce and foster a characteristic style of art; that although we " might share much of the spirit of the Germanic nations, this spirit would be modified, perhaps refined, " by our peculiar habits; above all, we should entirely agree with the Germans in concluding that we " are as little in want of foreign artists to represent and express our feelings, as of foreign soldiers to " defend our liberties. Even the question of ability (although that ability is not to be doubted " for a moment) is unimportant; for to trust to our own resources should be, under any circumstances, " the only course; ability, if wanting, would of necessity follow. Many may remember the time, " before the British army had opportunities to distinguish itself, when Continental scoffers affected " to dispute our pretensions to military skill. In the arts, as in the army, discipline, practice, and " opportunities are necessary to the acquisition of skill and confidence; in both a beginning is to " be made, and want of experience may occasion failure at first; but nothing could lead to failure in " both more effectually than the absence of sympathy and moral support on the part of the country. " Other nations, it may be observed, think their artists, whatever may be their real claims, the first " in the world; and this partiality is unquestionably one of the chief causes of whatever excellence " they may attain. It is sometimes mortifying to find that foreigners are more just to English " artists than the English themselves are."

The evidence of Mr. Wyse on the subject of Fresco Painting was very striking and convincing of its excellence in a national point of view, and, as such, eminently adapted to a building, exclusively national. He said, " In the instance of Munich, Fresco Painting has been applied to almost every class " of art and every department of history; beginning with the very earliest Greek history, and going " down to the present day. In the King's palace, for instance, you meet with illustrations of the Iliad, " passages from the Greek and Roman mythologies, from the earlier and later Greek and Roman " histories, from the early legends of the Germans, and continued from them onward a series of the " most important historical events, especially from the history of Bavaria: finally, in the apartments " of the Queen particularly, you have illustrations of the most remarkable poets of modern times, but " especially of the poets of Germany.

“ There is thus an opportunity for the display of every description of talent, and every description of knowledge. The effect upon the public at large is equally diversified: the higher class has an opportunity of judging of the propriety of classic illustrations, while I have seen the peasants of the mountains of Tyrol holding up their children to explain to them the scenes of Bavarian history almost every Sunday. This fact strikingly illustrates an observation I heard from Cornelius (Director of the Royal Galleries at Munich), that it was a difficult thing to impress upon the mind of a nation at large a general love of art unless you were to use as an instrument Painting upon a large scale, and Fresco was particularly suited for this purpose: it was not to be expected that the lower classes of the community should have any just appreciation of the delicacies and prior characteristics of painting in oil, and that they required large and simple forms, very direct action, and, in some instances, exaggerated expression.”

After this and similar evidence from practical men and amateurs of first rate ability, the Commissioners, of whom H. R. H. Prince Albert was at the head, in a Report addressed to Her Majesty, dated “ Gwyder House, Whitehall, April 22, 1842,” gave it as their opinion, “ that it would be expedient that advantage should be taken of the rebuilding of the Houses of Parliament for the purpose of promoting and encouraging the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom.”

Having thus come to an opinion on the first point to which their enquiry was directed, the Commissioners said, that they had given their attention to the question whether it would be expedient that Fresco Painting should be employed in the decoration of the new Houses of Parliament; but they had not been able to satisfy themselves that the art of Fresco Painting had been hitherto sufficiently cultivated in this country to induce them in at once recommending that it should be so adopted. In order, therefore, to assist them in forming a judgment in this matter, they proposed that artists should be invited to enter into a competition in cartoons, and had prepared a draft of an announcement on this subject, offering premiums of public money, to which they requested the sanction of Her Majesty, which was most graciously accorded.

The Commissioners gave notice that three premiums of £300., three of £200., and five of £100. each, would be given to artists who were to furnish cartoons which should be respectively deemed worthy of one or other of the said premiums by judges to be appointed to decide on the relative merits of the works which were to be executed in chalk or charcoal, or in some similar material, but without colours. The size of the drawings not to be less than ten nor more than fifteen feet in their largest dimension, and the figures not less than the size of life. The subjects to be chosen from British History, or the works of Spenser, Shakespeare, or Milton. The competition was originally confined to British artists, but afterwards was opened to foreigners practising the arts, who had resided ten years and upwards in Great Britain, and the time for sending in the cartoons was extended from the first week in May to the first week in June 1843. Artists were also invited to send in models for sculpture, specimens of carved work in wood, specimens of stained glass, and also of frescoes, arabesque drawings, and ornamental metal work and pavements, during the year 1843.

The judges appointed to award the premiums were the Marquis of Lansdowne, Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Samuel Rogers, Sir R. Westmacott, Mr. R. Cook, and Mr. Etty, and on the 24th June, 1843, they made the following awards to the cartoons.

PREMIUMS OF £300.		<i>Name of Artist.</i>
<i>Subjects.</i>		
Cæsar's First Invasion of Britain	...	EDWARD ARMITAGE.
Caractacus led in triumph through the streets of Rome	...	GEORGE FREDERIC WATTS.
First Trial by Jury	...	CHARLES WEST COPE.
PREMIUMS OF £200.		
St. Augustine preaching to Ethelbert and Bertha his Christian Queen	...	JOHN CALLCOTT HORSLEY.
Cardinal Bourchier urging the Dowager Queen of Edward IV. to give up from Sanctuary the		J. Z. BELL.
Duke of York	...	
The fight for the Beacon	...	H. J. TOWNSEND.
PREMIUMS OF £100.		
Una alarmed by the Fauns and Satyrs	...	W. E. FROST.
Joseph of Arimathea converting the Britons	...	E. F. PARRIS.
Boadicea haranguing the Iceni	...	H. C. SELOUS.
Alfred submitting his Code of Laws for approval to the Witan	...	JOHN BRIDGES.
Eleanor saving the life of her husband (afterwards Edward I.) by sucking the poison from the wound in his arm	...	JOSEPH SEVERN.

Her Majesty's Commissioners afterwards distributed £1000. in ten premiums of £100. each to ten other artists whose cartoons were approved by the judges, and this sum was awarded to Frank Howard, E. V. Rippingille, F. R. Pickersgill, Sir W. C. Ross, R. A., H. Howard, R. A., F. P. Stephanoff, J. G. Wall, W. C. Thomas, M. Claxton, and E. Corbould. The exhibition, which took place in Westminster Hall, was opened to the public on the 3rd of July, 1843.

In July, 1844, Her Majesty's Commissioners on the Fine Arts made a third Report, in which they proposed to commission six artists selected by them for the exhibitions, to furnish designs, coloured sketches, and specimens of Fresco Painting, for certain subjects proposed by them (the Commissioners) to be executed in the House of Lords.

The same Report states, that they were ready to recommend artists for the sculpture, arabesque painting, glass staining, wood carving, ornamental metal work, and ornamental paving.

It was proposed (and subsequently sanctioned by the Lords of the Treasury), that six compartments in the House of Lords should be decorated with Fresco Paintings; that the subject of each should be illustrative of the functions of the House of Lords, and of the relation in which it stands to the Sovereign; that the subject of three of the said Fresco Paintings should personify in abstract representations, Religion, Justice, and the Spirit of Chivalry; and that the three remaining subjects corresponding with such representations, and expressing the relation of the Sovereign to the Church, to the Law, and as the fountain of power to the State, should be the Baptism of Ethelbert; Prince Henry, afterwards Henry V., acknowledging the authority of Chief Justice Gascoigne; and Edward the Black Prince receiving the Order of the Garter from Edward III.

They commissioned six artists, viz. Richard Redgrave, A.R.A., William C. Thomas, C. West Cope, A.R.A., J. C. Horsley, W. Dyce, and D. Maclise, R.A., to prepare cartoons, coloured sketches, and frescoes, for the subjects above mentioned.

The question of oil painting then was discussed, and premiums offered for the best executed and most suitable productions. Sculpture was also duly considered, and Mr. Barry made a report respecting the localities in the new Houses of Parliament which might be adapted for the reception of works in sculpture, by which it appears that there were niches in the whole building, provided for the purpose of receiving statues, as follows:—In Westminster Hall twelve; in the Victoria Gallery one hundred and six; in the Queen's Porch four; in the House of Lords eighteen; in St. Stephen's Hall twelve; in the Central Hall, sixty-eight; making altogether two hundred and twenty niches, averaging seven feet high; and Mr. Barry adds that, according to his proposed arrangements, “the entire number of “public monuments that the building and its quadrangles could accommodate would be, in isolated “monuments or statues, two hundred and seventy, and in mural monuments and tablets about four “hundred, or, in the whole, six hundred and seventy monuments of all kinds.”

In their fourth Report the Commissioners were of opinion, that six insulated marble statues might be conveniently placed in St. Stephen's Porch, and sixteen such statues in St. Stephen's Hall; and they recommended that the statues of Nelson and Marlborough be at once executed for St. Stephen's Porch, and the statues of Selden, Hampden, Lord Falkland, Lord Clarendon, Lord Somers, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Chatham, Lord Mansfield, Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Grattan, be placed in St. Stephen's Hall.

Two lists, A. and B., were also drawn out and recommended by the Committee. List A, which the Commissioners had been unanimous in adopting, consisted of sixty-three of the worthies of Great Britain; and List B, of fifty-eight others, Monarchs, Nobles, Prelates, Barons, Poets, Historians, &c., on whom they had decided by greater or lesser majorities. In the eighteen niches in the House of Lords, it was resolved to place the effigies of that number of the principal Barons who signed Magna Charta. These have been already referred to, as well as the royal subjects chosen for the stained glass windows.

In the appendix to the sixth Report the Commissioners offered three premiums of £500. each; three premiums £300. each, and three premiums of £200. each, to the artists who should furnish Oil paintings which should be deemed worthy of one or other of the said premiums, by judges appointed to decide on the relative merit of the works, of which the following were eventually selected:

<i>Subjects.</i>	PREMIUMS OF £500.	<i>Artist.</i>
Burial of Harold at Waltham Abbey	F. R. PICKERSGILL.
Alfred inciting the Saxons to prevent the landing of the Danes by encountering them at Sea	. .	G. F. WATTS.
The Battle of Meeanee	. .	E. ARMITAGE.

PREMIUMS OF £200.

Subsequently the following oil paintings were purchased from the respective artists at the prices annexed :

The Burial of Harold (Pickersgill)	£400
Alfred inciting the Saxons (Watts)	£200
Richard Cœur de Lion forgiving Bertrand de Gourdon (Cross)	£500
Battle off Cape St. Vincent (Knell)	£200

In a seventh Report we have in detail the subjects selected in Painting and Sculpture, with a view to the picture decorations of the Palace. We have already alluded to those agreed upon for St. Stephen's Porch and St. Stephen's Hall: in the latter the Committee decided upon adding Paintings, illustrating some of the greatest epochs in our constitutional, social, and ecclesiastical history, and selected the following subjects :

A sitting of the Wittena-gemot. The Feudal system; The homage of the Barons to William the Conqueror. The origin of the House of Commons; The first writ brought down to the City of London. The termination of the Baronial Wars; Stanley and Oxford crowning Henry VII. over the dead body of Richard III. An early Trial by Jury. The Signing of Magna Charta. The Abolition of Villeinage; A Lord on his death bed, attended by the Clergy, manumitting his Villeins. The Privileges of the Commons asserted by Sir Thomas More against Cardinal Wolsey. The Conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity; The Preaching of St. Augustine. The Reformation; Queen Elizabeth receiving the Bible in Cheapside.

In the Central Hall are to be placed the representations of the four Patron Saints, St. George, St. Andrew, St. Patrick, and St. David.

In the Peers' Corridor the subjects chosen are

Charles I. erecting his Standard at Nottingham. Basing House defended by the Cavaliers against the Parliamentary Army. The Expulsion of the Fellows of a College at Oxford for refusing to sign the Covenant. Burial of Charles I. Speaker Lenthal asserting the privileges of the Commons against Charles I. when the attempt was made to seize the five Members. The Setting out of the Train Bands from London to raise the Siege of Gloucester. The Embarkation of a Puritan Family for New England. The Parting of Lord and Lady Russell.

In the Commons' Corridor they are to be

Charles II. assisted in his escape by Jane Lane. The Executioner tying Wishart's book round the neck of Montrose. Monk declaring for a Free Parliament. The Landing of Charles II. Alice Lisle concealing the Fugitives after the Battle of Sedgemoor. The Sleep of Argyll. The Acquittal of the Seven Bishops. The Lords and Commons presenting the Crown to William and Mary in the Banqueting House.

As the paintings in St. Stephen's Hall, and in the Corridors which unite the two Houses, tend to illustrate the gradual progress of our institutions during the interval which elapsed between the introduction of Christianity and the Revolution, it was thought that the Central Corridor might with advantage be adorned with pictures, exhibiting in strong contrast the extremes which are separated by

that interval. Six subjects were selected, in three of which Britain appears sunk in ignorance, heathen superstition, and slavery: in the other three she is instructing the savage, abolishing barbarous rites, and liberating the slave, viz.:

The Phœnicians in Cornwall. A Druidical Sacrifice. Anglo Saxon Captives exposed for Sale in the Market place of Rome. Cook in Otaheite. English Authorities stopping the Sacrifice of a Suttee. The Emancipation of Negro Slaves.

The Upper Waiting Hall is to be decorated with eight subjects, six of which have been selected from the Poets Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, Milton, Dryden, and Pope; the choice of such subjects being left to the artists who should be appointed to execute them, subject to the approval of the Commissioners. Four of the Frescoes have been decided upon, and are committed to the artists as follows:

(Milton.)	Satan touched by Ithuriel's Spear while suggesting evil dreams to Eve	... . . . .	J. C. HORSLEY.
(Chaucer.)	The Trial of Griselda's Patience	... . . . .	C. W. COPE, R. A.
(Shakspeare.)	Lear disinheriting Cordelia	... . . . .	J. R. HERBERT, R. A.
(Dryden.)	Alexander's Feast	... . . . .	J. TENNEIL.

In the Peers' Robing Room it was arranged to select subjects referring to the idea of Justice on Earth, and its development in Law and Judgment, viz.:

Moses bringing down the Tables of the Law to the Israelites. The Fall of Man; his Condemnation to Labour. The Judgment of Solomon; The Visit of the Queen of Sheba; The Building of the Temple; The Judgment of Daniel; Daniel in the Lion's Den; The Vision of Daniel.

In the Royal Anti-Chamber the Committee suggested that six large compartments therein, being at a considerable height, might be filled with copies in tapestry of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, taken either in part, or altogether, from the designs of tapestry originally existing in the House of Lords, which, "they conceive, it is of great importance to preserve as far as possible to the nation."

The twenty-eight upright compartments might be appropriately filled with portraits relating to the Tudor family.

Henry VII. Elizabeth of York. Arthur Prince of Wales. Katharine of Aragon. Henry VIII. Anne Boleyn. Jane Seymour. Katherine Howard. Anne of Cleves. Katharine Parr. Edward VI. Queen Mary. Philip II. Queen Elizabeth. Lewis XII. Princess Mary, Queen of France and Duchess of Suffolk. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. The Marchioness of Dorset. Lady Jane Grey. Lord Guildford Dudley. James IV. Douglas Earl of Angus. James V. Mary of Guise. Mary Queen of Scots. Francis II. Lord Darnley.

and in the twelve panels the following subjects in carved work:

The Field of the Cloth of Gold and the Visit of Charles V. to Henry VIII. The Escape of Mary Queen of Scots; The Murder of Rizzio; Mary looking back on France. Queen Elizabeth knighting Drake; Raleigh spreading his Cloak as a Carpet for the Queen; Raleigh landing in Virginia. Edward VI. granting a Charter to Christ's Hospital. Lady Jane Grey at her Studio. Sebastian Cabot before Henry VII. Katharine of Aragon.

In the Royal Gallery there are eighteen compartments, which it is proposed to fill as follows:

Boadicea inciting her Army. Alfred in the Camp of the Danes. Brian Baroimhe overcoming the Danes at the Bridge of Clontarf. Edith finding the dead Body of Harold. Richard Cœur de Lion coming in sight of the Holy City. Eleanor saving the Life of her Husband, afterwards Edward I., by sucking the Poison from a wound in his Arm. Bruee, during a retreat before the English, protecting a Woman borne on a Litter, and checcking the Pursuers. Philippa interceding for the Lives of the Citizens of Calais. Edward the Black

Prince entering London by the side of King John of France. The Marriage of Henry V. at Troyes with the Princess Katharine of France. Elizabeth at Tilbury. Blake at Tunis. Marlborough at Blenheim. Death of Wolfe. Death of Abercrombie. Lord Cornwallis receiving the Sons of Tippoo as hostages. Trafalgar: The Death of Nelson. Waterloo; The Meeting of Wellington and Blucher.

It is proposed to decorate the Queen's Robing Room with the Legend of King Arthur, to be executed chiefly in fresco by W. Dyce, R. A., who has undertaken to complete certain stipulated work in the same locality within a period not exceeding six years from July 1848.

In the Guard Room the subjects chosen are,

Young Talbot defending his Father in Battle, and Isabella Douglas barring the door with her arm to protect James I. of Scotland.

In the Lobby of the Guard Room is to be placed a painting of St. Edmund the Martyr, slain by the Danes.

In the Norman Porch the subjects will be

Canute reproving his Courtiers. Queen Elizabeth on the Sea side after the Defeat of the Spanish Armada.

And the Committee suggest that the subjects in all the localities mentioned should be accompanied with appropriate mottoes; that the subject of Canute might have "Nemo Dominus nisi Deus;" and the other, "Afflavit Deus et dissipantur."

In the Peers' and Commons' Refreshment Rooms the decorations will consist of views of places of chief importance in the United Kingdom, views of the most remarkable places in India and the Colonial possessions of the Throne, and also subjects connected with rural scenery, such as the Harvest, the Chase, &c.

In the Painted Chamber, which is the Hall of Conference between the two Houses, the Committee considered that the paintings in this locality might have reference to the acquisition of the Countries, Colonies, and important places constituting the British Empire, and that the following subjects would be appropriate.

The Marriage of Strongbow and Eva, daughter of Dermot, King of Leinster. Edward I. presenting his Infant Son to the Welsh as their Prince. James VI. of Scotland receiving the news of the Death of Queen Elizabeth: or Setting out for England as James I. Lord Clive in the Battle of Plassey. Penn's Treaty with the American Indians. The Colonization of Australia. The Treaty of Nanking. Incidents illustrating the Voyages to the North and South Poles. Incidents relating to the acquisition of Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope. Sir George Rooke planting the Standard of England on Gibraltar. Surrender of Malta.

The Committee thus concluded this Report:

"The entrance from Old Palace Yard is also intended to contain some compartments for painting; but your Committee conceived that it would be proper to postpone the consideration of subjects for this locality, as it is not yet certain whether paintings can be seen in it to sufficient advantage. With regard to the technical method in which paintings proposed should be executed, your Committee, although not prepared to offer a general recommendation on this subject, were of opinion that the pictures in the three corridors leading from the Central Hall and the pictures in the Refreshment Rooms, should be painted in oil, and that the Queen's Robing Room, St. Stephen's Hall, and the Royal Gallery, should be painted in fresco. The representation of the four Patron Saints, from their size and situation,

“ might be advantageously executed in Mosaic (like the Four Evangelists in the pendentives of the Cupola of St. Peter’s), thus giving an opportunity for the introduction into England of an art highly valued in other times and countries.

“ Your Committee have further to observe, that moveable oil paintings not coming within the general plan proposed, might be placed in Committee Rooms and in other parts of the buildings.”

Having given a description of the decorations to be executed in the New Palace, with views and elevations of the more finished portions of the building, the accuracy of which have been ensured by the kind facilities allowed by Mr. Barry; it is proposed, when the structure is more advanced, to issue a further series of Illustrations, and to detail more fully the arrangements which have been made for warming and ventilating the New Houses of Parliament; also a description of the Clock which is to be placed in the Clock Tower; with such particulars as we may be enabled to give, in order to render as perfect an account as possible, both in statement and illustration, of the PALACE OF WESTMINSTER.



